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### Biography.

*For the Panoplist.*

#### REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE OF MR. WILLIAM HOWARD.

Messrs. Editors,

WHAT I here send you is taken from a pamphlet, containing some remarkable passages in the life of Mr. William Howard, who died at North Ferriby, in the county of York, (Eng.) March 2, 1804, by JOSEPH MILNER, A. M. late master of the grammar school of Kingston upon Hull, and vicar of Trinity church.\*

He first relates the remarkable conversion of Mr. Howard, who was one of his parishioners. "His conversion was very similar to that of Col. Gardiner; not so striking in some circumstances, but equally solid." From the greatest profaneness, sensuality, and blasphemy, he was raised to the love and practice of Christian virtue and piety. The events of divine providence, and especially the preaching and conversation of Mr. Milner, were used by the Divine Spirit, as the .....

\* Readers may not all know what celebrity Mr. Milner has obtained by the excellent Church History, which he has lately published; of which, it is hoped, there will soon be an American edition.

means of awakening and convincing him, and of bringing him to the saving knowledge of Christ. In pointing out the excellence of his renewed character, Mr. Milner mentions, 1. *His uncommon religious joy.* "Wonder, gratitude, and love were the constant effusions of his soul, whenever he spoke of the Most High. His language was a continued series of blessing and praise, and that not in a formal manner, but with spontaneous ease and liberal dignity of mind." 2. *His godly fear.* Amidst the overflowings of his joy, he retained a constant fear of sin. His remembrance of what he had been, and still might be, if left to himself, had an evident tendency to temper his joy, and to preserve all his affections in their due equilibrium. 3. *The strength and simplicity of his faith.* 4. *His love.* His affections were ever on the wing towards God, equally lively and steady. He ardently loved the saints, and even panted for the conversion of sinners. 5. *Chastity.* This is particularly mentioned, because

"his soul had been the sink of uncleanness." He had few rivals in impurity, whether in word or deed. But after his conversion, no man was more pure, chaste, sober, and decent in his whole deportment. If he ever spoke of past scenes of folly, it was in the language of the deepest abhorrence and self humiliation. 6. *Humility.*

In pointing out the defects of Mr. Howard's character, Mr. Milner shows the admirable candour and impartiality of his heart. This is a branch of biography too little attended to by those, who write the lives of eminent Christians. "It seems to me useful," says Mr. Milner, "to show the whole of the character; and as this is evidently the divine method of procedure in the Scripture, all apology is superseded."

Mr. Milner closes with a chapter of reflections, from which the following are extracted. They are such as we should expect from this admired author.

"It is high time to ask the reader, what he thinks of the foregoing narrative, and to desire him to reflect what is the most probable mode of accounting for the extraordinary scenes which we have reviewed. Extraordinary it must be confessed they are; and, as a rational creature was the subject of them, and they issued in a lasting moral alteration of his principles and conduct, any person who judges seriously of the importance of events, and who feels with a proper degree of regard for the good of the human species, will overlook at once the political insignificance, both of the subject and of the author of these me-

moirs, and will own that nothing in the brilliant course of public affairs deserves half the attention.

"Let us state to our minds what is certain in these transactions. Here is an human being immersed in uncommon vice and profligacy, even to the decline of life. The force of habit has strengthened his passions in evil, by such a constant and uncontrolled course of indulgence, that, humanly speaking, his reformation is to be despaired of; the powers of conscience are, as it were, obliterated, and nothing remains within him, that seems capable of making the least head against the abounding torrent of iniquity: yet is this man, without any philosophical aids and reflections, suddenly, as in a moment, from a state of extreme insensibility, alarmed, awakened, changed in the whole bent of his affections, solidly, and abidingly altered in his whole deportment, and lives all the remainder of his days, a course of some years, a life of the most pious regard to his Maker, of the strictest chastity and temperance towards himself, and of the most genuine charity towards all mankind. Thus far, plain matter of fact lies before the reader. Had the story been told of a person living in China or Japan, it might have been said by some, with a sagacious sneer, that the writer had taken care to draw his narrative from a convenient distance; but the story here submitted to the reader's attention, lies within the compass of every one's means of information. I flatter myself its truth will not be disputed by any; and should any really doubt of it, I can easi-

ly supply them with abundant means of satisfying themselves.

"I. The first reflection which naturally occurs here then, is, what sort of doctrine, or what method, was made use of in the production of so admirable a change? because on all hands it will be allowed, that many are in the same dreadful circumstances, in point of morality, and it would be very much worth while to try the same medicines upon them.

"It would be a very absurd and unreasonable method of eluding the force of this whole business to say, "there seems nothing so very strange or extraordinary in it. The man took a sudden and strong resolution to alter his life; and it was a very happy circumstance that he stuck to the resolution; and this is the whole mystery of the matter." Such careless thoughts are extremely suitable to the sceptical and superficial taste of the day. Such an answer I remember \*, was made to a person, whose moral change was no less extraordinary than that of Mr. Howard, when he had told his story to a person of some eminence in this kingdom. But surely such random observations prove nothing but the supine indifference of those who make them. No doubt all moral changes must be attended with some resolutions of the person concerned, because the will of man must necessarily be interested in them. But the difficulty is, how to account for it, that a person so circumstanced should ever

come to make such powerful resolutions, or to have his will so disposed. To say that he does it by his will or resolution, no more accounts for the change, than to say, that it will account for a man's taking a journey to such a place, that he walked with his feet thither.

"The doctrines which Mr. Howardespoused, and to the force of which alone upon his heart he was ever ready to ascribe the change which took place in his whole man, were **JUSTIFICATION** and **REGENERATION**. I use these two terms for the sake of conciseness, as I see no reason why Christian divinity, low, very low indeed, and perfectly contemptible as it appears in the eyes of polite and fashionable people at this day, should not be allowed the use of comprehensive and convenient expressions, as well as other sciences. By the doctrine of *Justification* is meant, the particular method laid down in the Scripture of honourably acquitting sinful men before their God, through the atonement or righteousness of Jesus Christ, without the least regard had to their works or deservings, Rom. iii. 22—27. On the contrary it is supposed, that the man who is to be the subject of Christian justification, is a condemned sinner in himself, deserving only the wrath of God, and too deeply involved in guilt to be ever extricated by any merit of his own. This doctrine implies the character of the Supreme Being to be inflexibly holy and just, and makes room for the surprising display of his infinite mercy by the substitution of his only begotten Son, at once to satisfy divine

\* This fact I had from the person himself, who is now living, and is a very respectable clergymen in the metropolis.

Justice, to condemn sin, and to exhibit the purest discoveries of the most unbounded goodness. The reader has seen the influence of all this on Mr. Howard's mind. His distress of soul began with these very ideas of the divine purity and justice, as signally to be displayed on the last judgment-day, and his peace and comfort were at length as suddenly effected, by the discovery of the doctrine of Justification by Jesus Christ merely through faith, as above explained. Certain it is, that the great outlines of his change depended on this doctrine, scripturally understood, in connexion with its just dependencies. It was no smooth harangue on the moral fitness of things, or on the native beauty of virtue, or on the dignity of human nature, or on the arbitrary mercy of God, to the exclusion of his justice and purity, that had the least concern on his moral alteration. Such schemes and views may please the taste of corrupt mankind, and many would think them far more likely to have effected the change, than a doctrine so simple, and so contrary to men's natural notions. *Deo aliter visum.* No such happy effects have ever been the consequence of such lectures; but the instances of solid benefit derived from the Christian doctrine of Justification are innumerable.

"The other great Christian doctrine, which he as sincerely embraced, and which he ever looked on as of vast influence in all his religious concerns, is *Regeneration.* This doctrine implies man, all men without exception, to be naturally in a

state of extreme depravation, needing an entire renovation in all their affections and faculties, which change is called by Christ himself by the name of *being born again*, a change effected solely by the Spirit of God; and therefore those who are possessed of it are said to be *born of the Spirit.* All then who boast of man's natural love of goodness and virtue, and cherish ideas of the strength of his powers to save himself, militate wholly against those doctrines which he found so useful to his soul. Indeed it so happens in experience, that the success of such pretended reformers resembles that of noisy empirics in physic; the true lovers and genuine practitioners of genuine virtue being found only among those, whose very doctrine lays a solid foundation for humbling man, and glorifying his Maker.

"Thus far then the presumption lies in favour of these two doctrines of Justification and Regeneration, that a change so confessedly great, or a *conversion* so extraordinary (will the polite reader allow me the word? I really know no other so proper) was effected, supported, and carried on entirely by the influence of these doctrines.

"We may now proceed a step farther, and observe that his change cannot possibly be accounted for in any other way than by a divine influence. The doctrines which he espoused, and by the power of which alone it was effected, are certainly of so peculiar a nature, as to evidence their divine origin. That a sinner should be justified before his Maker, purely by the

merit of another, and in the way of believing only ; that man, in order to become holy, and fit for the society of his God, must be made a new creature, and be wrought upon by the Divine Spirit, not only without, but even against all his natural propensities ; and that the dispositions which constitute the character of an holy person, should be faith, hope, and love, and these too not of human, but of supernatural origin ; and that the whole happiness of his life must be sustained by a mysterious union with an invisible Mediator ; these are certainly such principles of religion as are perfectly unlike any thing that ever was invented by mere man. And they are things which lie so totally out of our reach, tend so purely to the honour of God, and are so calculated to stain the pride of human merit and glory, that we may safely pronounce them purely divine ; no man ever would or could have invented and propagated such ideas ; and we all know, or may know, that mankind are naturally too much at enmity against them ever, of themselves, to receive them. Now these are the principles of the New Testament, though it is very common for persons professing to believe the New Testament to despise and abhor them. But surely they have received their religious principles from a source very different from the sacred oracles ; and all the use they make of these is, by some subtle perversion to adapt some few detached texts to support a preconceived system. No man, who ever studied the Scriptures themselves with reverence and pray-

er, will say that he learnt from them to despise the doctrines of justification and regeneration.

"Now a certain divine power is spoken of in the word, as connected with the true preaching of it. It is said to be "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," Heb. iv. 12. Mr. Howard found it so ; in the day of God's power, a single text overcame his stubborn heart, and awed him into submission to the Most High. And when the effect is observed all along to have been perfectly correspondent to the descriptions given in the Scriptures, and he became abidingly holy, comfortable, and heavenly minded, emancipated from the dominion of every sin, and truly and fervently filled with the love of God, and of his neighbour, what shall we say ? Have we not here a demonstration of the truth of Scripture ? Does not the coincidence of what is written, with what is wrought, prove that both are equally from God ? It may be said, "it seems far more rational, that other kind of doctrine should be preached to men." But if matter of fact shews indeed, that no other sort of doctrine does burst the bonds of sin, and make men truly holy, should we not say with St. Paul, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men ?" What you think improbable, absurd, and foolish, is the real wisdom of God ; it is your own taste that needs to be rectified, and you ought to think more modestly of your own understanding. I see not how the conclusion can be avoided, that the work of Mr. Howard's con-

version was from God, and that the scripture doctrines of regeneration and justification are divine.

"And here one sees at first sight, how easy it is to answer the question, which with some confidence has been asked, "Granting that men may be influenced by the Divine Spirit, how can men ever distinguish his influences from the emotions of their own minds?" Every instance of conversion sufficiently answers this question. The subject of it knows experimentally, that such holy views and tempers could never be the product of his sinful nature; and their own native power and glory shew they are from God. He who has once seen the sun in his majesty, needs no other argument to convince him, that it is not a light of his creating.

"Till, then, some other adequate cause can be assigned for these religious phenomena, of which no age has ever been wholly destitute, it is reasonable to conclude, that "the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it."

"I am aware, that a partial reformation of conduct is attainable by other methods. Socrates might justly boast, that by his philosophy he had corrected some vices of his nature. And the libidinous Polemo, by hearing Xenocrates' lectures on temperance, might from a dissolute rake, be metamorphosed into a proud philosopher. Just as the Duke of Wharton, "whose ruling passion was the lust of praise," might undergo various alterations of external character, "now a punk, and now a friar."

But still in all such cases the radical character remains the same. To gratify self, in some form or other, was the very heaven of Socrates, of Polemo, and of Wharton. To humble themselves before the Most High, to give glory to their Maker, to love him sincerely and supremely, and to be renewed in the spirit of their minds, of this they knew nothing; but this is the change which my friend experienced. Self lost in him all its props and supports; he was a new creature throughout; he who had always lived for self, now lived for God. These men I have mentioned, and all who walked in their steps, whether Pagan, Philosopher, or Christian by name, are essentially distinct from this in their whole character. They may exchange one vice for another; what they part with in sensuality, is sure to be amply compensated in pride. It belongs to God's revealed religion alone, and to the power by which he applies it to the heart, to destroy the dominion of vice universally, and to make a man truly humble, wise, and happy.

II. The truth of this real influence of the Holy Spirit in producing the conversion of sinners, and the simple nature of Christianity, abstracted from those circumstances of controversy and of policy, that so often cloud and embarrass it, would appear in a very strong light to any one who should trace the historic progress of the gospel from age to age. It would take up a volume of some length to illustrate this, and the employment would well recompense the pains of any who should have leisure and ability sufficient for

the task. Infidel malice has been gratified, even to satiety, with tedious and circumstantial details of ecclesiastical history, constructed on a very different plan. The intrigues and politics of Churchmen, the ambition of Popes, the superstition of Monks, the subtilty of Jesuits, the external history too of the Reformation, and the factions of various sectaries, have been largely exposed. And though few think it worth their while to wade through the voluminous narratives of Fleury and Du Pin, yet in Mosheim's history their materials have been compressed into a narrower compass, and you see in him all that can tend to disgrace Christianity, reduced as it were to a point; and this is the effect with those who know not, and who care not what the gospel is, to render them indifferent with respect to Christianity itself, and to extol above all things the sceptical fastidiousness which, under the decent names of *moderation* and *charity*, now pervade the polite world. The excellence, indeed, of Mosheim's history is in most things very great, and perhaps unequalled. But as he seems himself not to have understood the nature of Christianity, all, or nearly all, his narrative is spent on external things.

"But there was in every century, from the apostles' days to ours, a real church, that which deserved the name in the best sense, men who feared God, and wrought righteousness, living by faith in the Son of God, and practically applying to their own hearts the peculiarities of Christianity, which, I must still say, on Scripture evidence, consist in

*justification* and *regeneration*. The gates of hell never prevailed against this church, though always opposed. Here alone the true nature and beauty of Christianity are seen. With these dwell the virtues and graces of the gospel, faith, hope, charity, patience, meekness, self-denial, and the love of heavenly things. The history of these, as they appeared in different places and circumstances, is, properly speaking, the history of the church.

"But in Mosheim they are scarce at all to be found. Public and noisy transactions engage his attention throughout. "Is this Christianity? (says the infidel)—Are these its fruits? What good has it done in the world?" How much more useful had it been to have been more sparing in these scenes, and to have laid open, in an impartial and ingenuous manner, the real church of Christ! This would have been properly the history of the church; the scenes which chiefly fill his book having no more to do with real Christianity, than robberies and assassinations have to do with good government. Yet his pains in laying open the evils and abuses is by no means to be condemned; it has its solid uses, which would appear also to great advantage, had the history of real Christianity been given also at the same time.

"For there have ever been some, who, though not many of them converted, perhaps, with the same remarkable circumstances that attended Mr. Howard's change of mind, have yet been converted by the same Spirit of God, and brought to the same principles and sensations; men who felt and owned themselves

lost and undone sinners by nature as well as practice ; men who in extremity were relieved by a divine light and aid, who found themselves comforted and refreshed with divine peace, purely through faith, by the righteousness and salvation of Jesus Christ ; men who knew emphatically *why* they called him *Saviour*, and enjoyed even in this life a real communion with him in their souls, who derived from his kindness, by the force of a mysterious, but powerful union, strength against sin, and all sorts of evil ; who lived in him spiritually, followed his example, indeed, in real holiness, had their conversation in heaven, and directed their ambition, in contempt of all that the world calls great, to an heavenly kingdom, contented here to be despised as fools and madmen, yet living according to every maxim of true wisdom ; returning good for evil, prayers for curses, and beneficence for persecution ; the real friends of mankind, new creatures indeed, and, finally, as distinct in spirit and taste from the rest of the world, as light is from darkness. These are the **CHRISTIANS** ; the history of these is the history of the church. Malignant opposers of the Scriptures miss their mark altogether, when they censure Christianity, because of the wickedness of vast numbers who are called Christians ; for, strictly speaking, they are infidels as well as themselves ; and so long as men despise the essential principles of Scripture, they ought to be so esteemed, whatever they please to call themselves.

“ Did we accustom ourselves to view the church in this, which

is its true light, we should not complain of the difficulty of finding out whom, or what we are to believe, amidst the endless distractions of controversy. We have only to turn away our eyes from the many scenes of mock Christianity, and steadily survey that which is genuine. For there have ever been those who have held, and felt and practised, as has been described. Setting aside also some lesser differences of opinion, which they may have had among themselves, the views of the fall, and of human depravity, of justification by Jesus Christ, and redemption through his blood, of a life of entire dependence on him, and of those fruits of holiness which result from it, are simple, uniform, clear, intelligible ; the most so of any thing in the world, when the mind is rightly disposed to receive the truth, and submit to it in all its energy.

“ This is then the way to judge of Christianity. The fulfilment of the Scriptures, and the divine origin of the religion itself, would hence be shewn in a light unanswerably strong.

“ The acts of the apostles form a very precious beginning of this history, and have in this view been judiciously illustrated in a late publication by an able and pious divine of the church of England.\* He has not prosecuted the history beyond the first century ; and I confess the task, as we advance downward to the times of the Reformation, grows more arduous. It might however be done ; and historical proofs are not wanting from age to age of the true church of

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\* Newton's Ecclesiastical History.

Christ, shining as a light in the midst of a dark world. The scene shifts indeed from place to place. The Spirit of God is grieved from time to time ; candlesticks are removed, and still the light, which is *here* extinguished, rises *there*, and burns with triumphant glory. In vain shall we seek to confine it within the pale of certain denominations. The grace of God will not be thus fettered, and we ought to separate it in our ideas from all externals and circumstantial whatever. For ages, even amidst the corruptions of Popery, some souls were partakers of its influence. But when the church was seemingly near a total extinction, it was revived with wonderful power at the reformation. Even the Jansenists in France, though Papists by name, were possessed of the same holy flame, which animated the breasts of pious Protestants, at the very time too that the church of England, a Protestant church by constitution, had relapsed into a contempt of the gospel. In our own times a glorious change has in her taken place ; evangelical principles have been revived ; they are spreading at this day with vigour and effect. May the land in general feel their force ! And as the church has ever been thus preserved, so particular instances of very extraordinary exertions of the grace of God have appeared from age to age, as it were to call up the attention of a slumbering world.

" III. There is a method not uncommonly made use of to evade the force of this whole argumentation, which as it meets us in full opposition, though

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with a specious appearance of friendship, it will behove us to expose in its true light. What has been advanced concerning the doctrines of Christianity, their influence, their necessity, their importance, has its truth, and must be owned by every Christian. But then why such extreme censoriousness, why such contracted bigotry ? The generality of the clergy and laity do at bottom hold the same things as those which you so vehemently insist on ; only they are more moderate in their manner, and more wary in their use of these truths. They make some concessions to the world in things not very material, for the sake of doing good in things of greater consequence. It is not the doctrine, but the intemperate manner of applying it, which exposes those who call themselves evangelical, to censure and ill-will ; and particularly their want of charity can never be vindicated, in supposing none to be right but those who use exactly the same language as themselves.

" The sophistry of this charge deserves to be distinctly considered. And to prevent mistakes, it must be confessed, that if the persons described under the last article, as members of the real church of Christ, had nothing to shew for the vindication of their peculiar principles and practice but an affected discrimination from others in point of phraseology ; if, in short, verbal distinctions were all they had to boast of, their conduct would be indeed indefensible. It would not only be uncharitable and bigoted, but also weak and unmanly. For what more unworthy of

rational creatures, than to raise disputes among themselves on mere terms, when their ideas are the same !

" But this is far from being the case in the present instance ; and every candid observer, who has thought with any clearness or precision on these subjects, must see that the difference is in ideas, not in words, and is extremely momentous, even more so than language can describe.

" That the religion briefly described in the last article, and peculiarly distinguished by holding out the doctrines of Justification and Regeneration, is essentially distinct from that of those who deny the Godhead and atonement of Jesus Christ, and the personality and influence of the Holy Ghost, will be at once allowed.

" Many, however, do yet hold the doctrines of the Trinity and the atonement of Jesus Christ in a general manner, though they seem to make little use of them in practice, and do evidently lay the great stress for their hope of heaven on the performance of moral duties, and yet at the same time treat with perfect contempt all ideas of conversion or regeneration ; not perhaps denying the thing itself, yet ridiculing all pretensions of any person to the experience of them in our days. If this be a true account of the state of many of the Clergy and Laity in this kingdom, one sees at first sight why they object to the *manner* of setting forth these things. They have no idea of any personal *use* and application of them to the heart and conscience. And how then do they differ essentially from those who deny them altogether ? For what

is all the doctrine in the world abstracted from its use ?

" Granting, however, that there are many things in which good men may safely differ, and ought to shew a spirit of mutual forbearance and moderation, certainly the doctrine of justification is not one of those subjects. If any question can be conceived to be even of infinite importance, it is this—How shall man be accepted with his Maker ? We trifle only with God and our souls, while we content ourselves with a loose and general idea of Christ's atonement, and bring it to no one determinate point of utility whatever. For the question is this :—Ought I to trust *entirely* in Jesus Christ, and to renounce my own righteousness *entirely*, in order for salvation, or is it unsafe and dangerous so to do ; and ought my hope of heaven to be founded partly on the merit of Christ, and partly on my own ?—This is the clear state of the question as it lies between the two parties before us on the subject of justification. And is this a nominal distinction ? Is it of no consequence whether man be thoroughly humbled, or allowed to glory in something of his own ? whether God and the Lamb are to have all the honour of his salvation, or not ? There is an essential difference of opinion here, and the difference produces a most material distinction in the whole of practical religion. The very ends and motives of duty which each party propose to themselves are widely opposite. The love of God is the grand motive of the one system, self-righteousness of the other. But surely to every real Christian,

whatever doubts he may have, (and he has many on religious subjects) it is no matter of doubt at all whether he be a fallen creature, dead altogether in sin by nature. It is no matter of hesitation whether he is to seek acceptance with God by the blood of Jesus Christ, or by the works of the law. It is not a problematical subject with him, Whether he must be born again, if ever he enter into the kingdom of God ; whether this new birth, with all its fruits and consequences, be wrought by the will of man, or by the Spirit of God alone ; whether his good works ought of necessity to be principled by the love of God or not.

" But enough has been said to shew that there is a real difference of opinion here ; and those who content themselves with the forms of orthodoxy above described, may be convinced of it by the opposition which they feel in their own breasts to that view of things which I have been espousing. Let them search, however, the Scriptures with honest minds, and at least cease from saying that they mean the same things as those which they oppose. For if indeed this be the case, why do they shew such aversion to these principles ? why dislike to have them set forth in the plainest manner ? why are they more cordial, and feel their own spirits to be more in unison with Socinians, sceptics, and with any sort of persons, than those whom they deem enthusiasts ? why such ridicule and contempt of the new birth ? why is the preaching of their system, if it be a system at all, of no weight, no influence ? Is it not incredible that, if in-

deed their doctrine was the same, no instances of any conversion shouldever happen among them ? Is it not still more incredible, that they should deride the very idea of conversion itself ? Why are they so fearful of the cross of Christ ? why so conformable to the taste and spirit of the world ? How happens it, that the people in general who attend their ministry, are so ignorant of the first principles of Christianity ? I remember Mr. Howard told me, that he never, in all his life, heard of the new birth from any pulpit, till he heard it at Ferriby ; and I apprehend that many might justly make a similar remark. It were much to be wished, that the truth was clearly seen in this point ; because while men fancy the common, beaten, broad, fashionable road, which exposes them to no inconveniences, will lead to the same end as the narrow and difficult road, they will never leave the one for the sake of the other.

" IV. If the doctrines of justification and regeneration be then real scripture doctrines, and enter into the principles of a work of divine grace on the heart ;— if they prove their divine origin by their own light and native energy ; if they have never failed, in every age of the church, to be attended with undeniable seals of their divinity, in the conversion and holy lives of some ; if these alone constitute the church, and if every other sort of principles be diametrically opposite, what remains but that we betake ourselves to the study of the sacred oracles, and see what is the religion there enforced ? On a fair examination we shall find, that the principles which in this

kingdom have been spreading for about forty years, and have been stigmatized with the opprobrious terms of weakness and enthusiasm, are in reality the religion of the apostles and primitive Christians. And a little candid examination will convince any reasonable man, that they are no other than those which the Reformers in Germany and England professed, and on which the Church of England is founded. The decline has been so deep with us, and scepticism, profaneness, and an illegitimate and unscriptural charity have been propagated in so general a manner, that the revival of these principles subjects men to the censure of introducing some strange sectarian ideas, though they contain nothing new, nothing particular, nothing different from the creed of the wisest and most intelligent Christians of all ages, nor from the genuine doctrine of the church. Much pains has been taken to suppress them ; persecution has been tried, but the spirit of the times, and the lenity of government have ever rendered it ineffectual. The most indecent publications, on the plan of wit and raillery, have been attempted ; nor has the more reasonable mode of argument been neglected. Yet these principles live and flourish; and every lover of truth will rejoice to find, that many of the established clergy are opening their eyes more and more, and entering into the spirit of the New Testament with increasing ardour. The hand of God also has evidently been with them. Mr. Howard's case, tho' somewhat singular in circumstances, is by no means so in

substance. "Men are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." Multitudes are reformed, and lead holy lives, wherever these principles prevail. I frankly avow that the recommendation of these principles was the design of this publication. Let it only be allowed, that there is such a thing as a divinely revealed religion, that the knowledge and power of it are of infinite importance, and then if any one will still fastidiously refuse these principles an hearing, let him ask himself, where, and among what sort of persons he can expect to find the real Christian religion ? If he is not quite buried in profaneness and pride, he will scarce look for it among Arians and Socinians. What ! is the Spirit of God with those who degrade the essential dignity of the Saviour, or despise the operations of the Holy Ghost, or explain away the only hope of a sinner—the atonement of the Son of God ? Will he look for the Christian religion among the common professors of orthodoxy ? This will, in our days, comprehend a very large part ; about forty years ago, it comprehended almost the whole of the established clergy. But what signature of divine life can be traced among them ? Is there not an evident want of zeal with respect to religion ? not to say among many a want of any plan or system of ideas at all ? Is there the least spiritual good apparent among them ? Do any in hearing discourses from the pulpit, ever obtain, or expect to obtain any benefit ? Can a single instance be produced, in the course of twenty or thirty years, of a sin-

gle person reclaimed from vice, in consequence of this religion?

"He must then, if truly serious for his soul, look for the religion of Christ among those who, under God, have of late years been the instruments of the revival already mentioned. And may he look to good purpose! May the dawn of gospel light, the very best symptom of divine favour which this kingdom, amidst all its alarming evils, can boast, break out into open day! I would not despair but that even some of the Dignitaries of the church may not only view with more friendly eyes, as they lately have done, but themselves also, with honest zeal, espouse and support the precious peculiarities of Christianity. Devoutly should we pray, that that "God, who alone worketh great marvels, would send down upon our bishops and curates, and all congregations committed to their charge, the healthful spirit of his grace."

"Let me be permitted to suggest to my brethren of the clergy, that they have taken upon them a weighty charge indeed, the feeding of precious souls, whose blood will be required at their hands, if they be found unfaithful; and that a life of mere indolence and pleasure, or spent in the pursuit of preferment and attendance on the great, or even in the fairer and more creditable attention to matters of learning and taste, or worldly business, is by no means calculated to qualify them for the right discharge of the task which they have undertaken. "With whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?" is a very awful inquiry, which at the last judgment

day will be made of every pastor; and it behoves us to consider what answer we can return to it. To have been useful in promoting the salvation of only a few souls, will one day be found more noble, as it is certainly a more solid achievement, than to have amassed all the treasures of learning and philosophy, or to have outstripped all their equals in ecclesiastical preferment."

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#### SKETCH OF THE REV. THOMAS DOOLITTLE.

THOMAS DOOLITTLE, M. A. of *Pembroke-Hall, Cambridge*, was born of religious parents in 1630. He early discovered an inclination to learning. Some of his friends would have had him brought up to the law, and he was actually placed with an attorney upon trial; but being set to copy some writings on the *Lord's day*, he resolved against that profession, and determined on the ministry; in which he had Mr. Baxter's encouragement, whose discourses on the *Saints' Rest* were blessed for his saving conversion. He was an experienced Christian, before he was a minister; and, as he improved in learning, he also grew in grace.

When he left the University, he came to *London*, where he was soon noticed for his warm and affectionate preaching; and the Parish of St. *Alphage* called him to be their pastor. He accepted the office with great diffidence, and applied himself to his work with all his might; and the hand of the Lord was eminently with him. In this place he continued

nine years, *viz.* till the *Bartholomew Act passed*; when, having carefully studied the terms required, and prayed for Divine direction, he thought it his duty to be a Nonconformist, cheerfully casting himself and family upon Providence; whose concern for him he soon experienced; for the day after he preached his farewell sermon, one of his parishioners presented him 20 pounds, saying, "there was something to buy bread for his children, as an encouragement to his future trust." He then set up a boarding school in *Moor-fields*; and so many were desirous to have their children with him, that he soon had occasion for a larger house.

Upon the breaking out of the plague, he called his friends together, to seek the Divine direction; and, according to their advice (on account of the youth under his care) he removed to *Woodford bridge*, leaving Mr. T. Vincent in his house. In this village his family continued healthy, and many resorted to his house for the worship of God. After the plague, he returned to *London*; and, having counted the cost, he opened a meeting house, though against law, near his own; which proving too small, he erected a large and commodious one in *Morkwell street*, where he preached to a numerous auditory, and had many seals to his ministry. Here Mr. Vincent assisted him; and the Lord Mayor, sending for them both, endeavoured to dissuade them from preaching on account of the danger they were in. They told his lordship, "that they were satisfied of their call to preach the gospel, and

therefore could not promise to desist. The next Saturday a messenger of the king, with a company of the train bands, came at midnight to seize Mr. Doolittle in his house, but he made his escape. He purposed to have preached the next morning, but was persuaded to forbear. Another person readily undertook to preach for him; and, while in sermon, a company of soldiers came in, and the officer called aloud to him, "I command you in the king's name, to come down." He answered, "I command you in the name of the King of kings, not to disturb his worship." On which the officer bid his men fire. The minister, undaunted, clapping his hand on his breast, said, "Shoot, if you please, you can only kill the body." The people, upon this, being in an uproar, he escaped in the crowd unhurt. After this, Mr. Doolittle was absent from home some weeks, and on Lord's day, guards were set before the meeting-house. At length the justices came, and had the pulpit pulled down, and the doors fastened, with the king's broad arrow set upon them.

Upon a licence, granted by king Charles in 1672, Mr. Doolittle resumed his place, and set up an Academy at Islington, where he educated several young men for the ministry. When the Oxford Act passed, he removed to Wimbleton, and several of his pupils attended his lectures privately. While he resided here, he experienced a remarkable providence. As he was one day riding out with a friend, he was met by a military officer, who took hold of his horse. Mr. Doolittle asking him, what he meant by stopping

him on the king's highway, he looked earnestly at him, but not being certain who he was, let him go, and went away threatening "that he would know who that black devil was, before he was three days older." Some of Mr. Doolittle's friends were much concerned for him; but on the *third* day a person brought him word, that the captain was choked at his table with a bit of bread. After this he removed to Battersea, where his goods were seized and sold. In several other places his house was rifled, and his person often in danger; but Providence so favoured his escape, that he was never imprisoned. At length the toleration gave him an opportunity of returning to his place and people in London, where he continued as long as he lived, preaching twice every Lord's day. He had also a lecture on Wednesdays, at which he delivered his Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism. He had great delight in catechising, and urged ministers to it, as having a special tendency to propagate knowledge, to establish young persons in the truth, and to prepare them to read and hear sermons with advantage.

Mr. Doolittle made religion his business, and was best pleased when taken up in the exercises of it. Scarcely any one spent more time in his study, the advantages of which appeared in his own improvement, and in his preparations for the pulpit; not satisfying himself *to offer to God or his people that which cost him nothing*.—In his latter years he was more than once brought near the grave; but, on his people's fervent prayers, he was wonderfully restored. A life prolonged beyond his usefulness he feared, as the greatest trial; and God graciously prevented it. For the Lord's day before his death he preached and catechised with great vigour, and was confined but two days to his bed. In the valley of the shadow of death he had such a sense of the divine presence, as proved a powerful cordial for his support. He died in May, 1707, aged 77, and was the last of the ejected ministers in London. After his death, was found a solemn and very particular form of covenanting with God, which may be seen in the memoirs of his life, prefixed to his *Body of Divinity*, whence the above account is extracted.

ORTON.

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## **Religious Communications.**

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### **SURVEY OF NEW ENGLAND CHURCHES.**

(Concluded from p. 412.)

*To suggest those things which are necessary to the prosperity of our churches, was specified as one design of this SURVEY. This design has, in a measure,*

been already accomplished. For we cannot mention prevailing disorders, without making it manifest, in every instance, what the welfare of Zion requires. If the want of Christian piety in church members; if the decline of gospel discipline; if the indifference of churches respect-

ing the character and theological opinions of ministers ; if the neglect or abuse of catechetical instruction, and the growing contempt of creeds, are all evils of alarming magnitude, and of destructive tendency ; then their removal is highly important to the good of the churches. The welfare of Zion requires, that the character of nominal Christians, in general, be reformed, and that more care be used for the future in the admission of church members ; that faithful discipline in its various branches be revived ; that churches exercise proper vigilance respecting the religious character and sentiments of their ministers, and be strictly attentive to the duty of catechising ; and, finally, that confessions of faith be restored to that use, which is agreeable to Christian wisdom, and which experience has shown to be so advantageous to the cause of truth.

But there is one thing, which seems to claim a more distinct consideration, that is, *a comprehensive plan*, designed to forward all wise and promising measures for the common interest of Christianity, especially for the good of the churches in this Commonwealth. What I intend is a **GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS IN MASSACHUSETTS**. The nature of ministerial associations is so far understood by the bulk of people, that there is no need of minute description. At present it is sufficient to observe, that the object of the proposed association is, by joint consultation and mutual assistance to promote the cause of Christian truth and holiness.

Without anticipating the arguments, by which I design to recommend this important measure, I cannot forbear to express wonder, that any objection should ever be raised against it. To say the least, *what can be more unexceptionable, than for a number of gospel ministers, from different associations through the Commonwealth, to assemble, annually, for the purpose of inquiring into the state of the churches; of devising means for the promotion of religion; of contributing to each other's improvement, and animating each other to duty?*

But it is my design to state several distinct arguments in favour of a **GENERAL ASSOCIATION** in Massachusetts. As we proceed, the nature of the proposed association will more fully appear.

My first argument in favour of a **GENERAL ASSOCIATION** will be derived from the *common practice of men*. The disciples of Christ have always been disposed to form associations, for the purpose of promoting the interests of religion. They have found from age to age that, in their individual, unassociated state, they have not had that influence, which union would give them. Perceiving the advantage of combining their counsels and efforts, they have at every period united themselves in larger or smaller societies, as circumstances have seemed to require. Thus they have secured the benefit of joint wisdom and reciprocal aid, and have doubled their power to withstand their adversaries, and to defend their own righteous cause. Time would fail, should I attempt to

recount the numerous associations of Christian ministers, which have taken place in different ages, or the multiplied advantages which have resulted from them. What efficacious resistance has ever been made against the rising power of Christ's enemies, or what great reformation has ever been set forward and completed, without such a measure as we now recommend.

Notice might here be taken of the general assembly of Presbyterian ministers in the United States; of the general association in Connecticut; of the general convention in Vermont; and of other forms of general union among Episcopalians, Baptists, Moravians, Methodists, &c. who all secure their respectability and perpetuate their existence by similar means. On careful inquiry it will appear, that the Congregational ministers in this Commonwealth are in a state of *singular disunion*. There are, indeed, smaller associations, which are held in esteem in every part. But every argument, which favours these, may be urged in support of a general association. If it be suitable, that a small number of ministers in the same circle should meet to deliberate on the great concerns of religion; why is it not suitable, that a larger number, belonging to different circles, should meet for the same purpose?

Popish councils, assemblies, consistories, &c. which have contributed so much to the propagation of error and the injury of the true church, are mentioned as objections against such associations, as we are now

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advocating. But I shall place them, as arguments on the other side. The friends of error would not have been so fond of forming themselves into societies, had they not known the peculiar advantages of union. In order to execute their plans more readily, and to secure those advantages, which they have deemed necessary to their triumph, they have joined themselves together in an *unnatural league*. By acting in union, they have vastly increased their influence. The enemies of Christianity have for many years seemed peculiarly sensible of the importance of combination. The uncommon boldness which they display, and the strength and success, which they have obtained, are in a great measure consequences of their union. Though they differ in many respects; yea, though they have no natural bond of amity; yet they are so wise, as to lay aside their differences, and to combine together for the advantage of their cause. Nor is there any way, in which we can effectually oppose their influence, but by zealous co-operation. Their union calls for union in us. A holy confederacy among ministers and Christians would soon weaken their growing power. If the Congregational clergy in this state would form themselves into a harmonious body, their influence would be sensibly felt. Their adversaries dread the light, which would shine forth from an assembly of faithful ministers convened for consultation and prayer. The Christian cause has a remarkable superiority over the cause of impiety. For whereas there necessarily

exist among the wicked radical disunion and perpetual interference ; there is among Christians a real foundation for the most cordial and entire harmony. Remove those wrong affections, which stand in opposition to their prevailing disposition, and persuade them to feel and act as Christians, and they will show that *they are one*. As far as this union exists, and takes a proper direction, the church becomes *an army with banners*, which its enemies cannot subdue.

The grand principle, on which my reasoning rests, that is, the advantage of well regulated union, is recognised in the constitution of all societies. Why do men unite themselves together in the social compact, except for the manifest advantages which arise from it ? The necessity of coalescence is especially felt in times of danger. When the alarm of an approaching enemy is sounded, men, how divided soever before, immediately form themselves into a body, so that their power, which in a disunited state is nothing, may be increased and rendered invincible by union. What could men do against a potent, bloodthirsty foe, should they continue in a separate, unformed state, and each fight at his own door, and according to his own discretion ? Without a better mode of defence than this, a whole nation must fall before an inconsiderable host. But when, or in what circumstances is union more needed, than among ministers and Christians at the present day ? How great the strength, how alarming the success of the ungodly !

How much has Zion already suffered for want of agreement among her sons ! Let, then, her watchmen come together, consult for her safety and prosperity, and unite in action and prayer, or her desolation draweth nigh.

How do men recognise the advantages of union in all branches of business. They join together to promote their success in their mercantile, mechanical, and literary pursuits. In all, the benefits of association are incalculable. But no where can union be of such eminent advantage, as in religion. Because no where else is there a foundation for such perfect agreement in the great object of pursuit, and in the means of obtaining it.

My second argument in favour of a **GENERAL ASSOCIATION** arises from *the circumstances of the times*. The gospel ministry in this commonwealth is unhappily in a very broken, dismembered state. In many instances those Christian teachers, who are united in the love of divine truth, and fervently engaged in the cause of the Redeemer, are estranged from each other in affection, and filled with mutual prejudices. Now let each party flatter themselves as they please, this must be recorded to the shame of the ministers of Massachusetts, as long as the gospel abides in the land. Their discord is productive of aggravated evils. It bars them from the comfort and advantage of mutual intercourse and confidence. It weakens their hands, and contracts their usefulness. In their present state of separation and estrangement, what power have they to prosecute any measure

for the general interest of Christ's kingdom, or even for each other's edification? People take notice of their variance, and not only deride them, but become hardened against religion.\* Their minds are unsettled respecting Christianity, by the disagreement of those, who are authorized to teach it.

Now how desirable it is, that the scattered fragments of the Congregational ministry in this state be collected & joined together in the bonds of Christian love? Who that has the spirit of Christ, does not devoutly wish it? What a serious attempt for union ought the present state of the ministry to excite?

The state of our churches will add to the strength of the argument. When the whole number of professors is comparatively so small, and even among them the spirit of piety is sunk so low; what can be more reasonable, or promise more extensive good, than for ministers, who have the interest of religion at heart, to meet together in the name of Christ, and deliberate on measures for Zion's welfare? Is it not plainly necessary, that something be done to advance the cause of holiness, and to avert impending judgments? And can it be expected, that God will save and prosper the church, without employing the wisdom and diligence of his servants? If they were agreed among themselves, and would perform as much as possible of God's work, with *unanimity*; they would possess far greater ability to do good. Their instructions would have a sacred influence with the

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\* See Baxter's *Reformed Pastor*.

people; their office would be respected, their religion honoured, and their divine Master adored. What a blessed contrast to the present state of things would be presented, if a general union should take place among evangelical ministers in this commonwealth.

This argument for a general association will be still further strengthened, when we attend to the number, skill, and activity of Zion's enemies. How are they multiplied, who rise up against the truth? Was there ever a time, when the foes of Christ were more numerous, or when they showed more resolution and boldness, assumed a greater variety of shapes, or were more elated with success? With them it is a day of exploits. They have had famous leaders, and obtained signal victories. They seem inspired with unyielding courage and perseverance. If unsuccessful in one way, they still repair to another, and are never weary of exertion. When every other method fails, they know how to take advantage of division among the servants of Christ. Animated by so much appearance of *this* at the present day, as well as by other circumstances which fire their zeal, they have taken a most daring posture, and appear resolved, by open and by secret means, to make one great effort for general and final triumph. Behold the enemy thus coming in like a desolating flood upon us. Let us throw away all prejudice and strife, combine our influence and lift up the standard of the Lord against them.

I argue, *thirdly*, from the genuine spirit of Christianity. This

argument, addressed to the piety of Christ's ministers, calls for attentive and prayerful consideration. All those Scriptures, which require ministers to love one another, to live in peace and unity, and to seek each other's edification and the general interest of the church, implicitly require attention to all the means, by which their love, edification, and unity, as ministers, and the general interest of the church may be advanced. And if it appear, that a general association of ministers in this State is one of those means; who can hesitate with respect to duty?

But this argument may be considered in a different view. Christianity is the religion of love. *Love to God*, which is the sum of Christian goodness, naturally excites in his people, especially in his ministers, a pious solicitude for his glory and cause. Governed by that affection, they will frequently and earnestly inquire, how Christ's church prospers in different parts, what are the measures and instruments of his enemies, and in what way his friends can best subserve his glory and the welfare of his kingdom. Such was the practice of the apostles. Their care and labour were not confined to one place. The general interest of the church constantly occupied their thoughts. Wherever they were, they never lost sight of this object. They sent to the churches *to know their faith*. They travelled to distant parts, that they might learn what was the state of the saints, and might join with them in consultation and prayer for the success of their common cause. Primitive Christians loved one another.

They often met together to enjoy free conversation, to seek a more perfect acquaintance with each other, to mingle their joys and their sorrows, and to promote, as far as possible, each other's usefulness and comfort. If we are governed by the Christian spirit, we shall studiously imitate the conduct of the primitive saints.

Christianity is the religion of *candour* and *forbearance*. Under its benignant influence, gospel ministers will compassionate each other's weaknesses; and will endeavour to correct each other's errors, to improve each other's knowledge and grace, and *to walk together as far as they are agreed*.

Christianity is the religion of *peace*. Though it is made the occasion of kindling a fire on the earth; it must surely be expected to promote peace among its friends. If gospel ministers do not perfectly agree in sentiment; let them lay aside their envyings and jealousies, and come together with conciliating hearts, consulting how to manage their differences so as not to injure the Christian cause, nor discredit the great truths, which they all profess to own. It is not to be expected, that Christian ministers will give up their opinions any farther than an enlightened understanding and conscience direct. But it is to be expected that those who love the peace of Jerusalem, will meekly and kindly explain their sentiments to each other, and endeavour to discover in what, and how far they can harmonize. Although they are in earnest to defend their own peculiar sentiments by fair reasoning; they

must prefer the whole of Christianity before a part, and be careful not to hinder the common cause. Peacemakers reject and abhor that conceit of unquiet spirits, that the interest of religion depends wholly on those opinions, which distinguish them from others. They weep over the wounds of the church, and long for its healing ; and will, therefore, most cordially encourage every pacific measure. The real mother is not willing that her child should be divided. The real Christian pastor ardently desires the common peace and prosperity of the church, *and would not have the whole building endangered rather than that one nail or pin should be driven otherwise than he chooses.*\*

Christianity is the religion of humility. They, who possess its spirit, will not entertain undue confidence in their own opinions or goodness. They prefer others before themselves. In difficult cases, they wish for the advice and assistance of their brethren. The servants of Christ feel their need of one another. Young ministers might derive special advantage from an association with those, who are more experienced. And few ministers have such inconsiderable talents, that they may not sometimes improve the wisest. They who are endued with the most shining parts, if they are humble, will not think themselves above the need of assistance, but will earnestly desire the counsel and friendship of others. If any consider their knowledge and virtue so eminent, as to raise them above the need of their brethren,

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\* Reformed Pastor.

that very consideration may be urged to show, that their brethren need them. Let them, therefore, come forward, and furnish their supply of gifts for the good of the whole.

Before closing this paper, justice seems to require, that the principal objections against a GENERAL ASSOCIATION in this state should be briefly noticed.

1. It is asked, *What valuable purpose can it answer ? What object can be attained sufficiently important to justify such a measure ?*

In reply, I would ask, what more valuable purposes can be mentioned, than those, which a general association is calculated to accomplish ? What more important objects can be sought, than the union, the improvement, and the usefulness of gospel ministers, and the prosperity of the churches ? Who can charge with excess the most vigorous efforts to obtain these objects ? In such a cause, what expense of time and labour, what fervency of prayer can be thought extravagant ?

2. It is said, *that the discordant opinions, which prevail among the clergy of Massachusetts, preclude the possibility of happy union and useful cooperation ; and, therefore, that it is best they should continue as they are, and be content to do what good they can in their own circles.*

Reply. It is by no means expected, that the GENERAL ASSOCIATION will embrace the whole Congregational clergy in Massachusetts. It is not to be disguised that those, who have laid the foundation of the proposed union, have voted, *that the doctrines of Christianity, as they are gener-*

ally expressed in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, be admitted as articles of faith, and as the basis of union. The door is open for the admission of those ministers, who, with all their minor differences, receive what are called THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE. Now with respect to such ministers, the objection, above stated, may be satisfactorily answered in two ways. *First.* There is no difference of opinion among them, which need to prevent brotherly love, or interrupt ministerial fellowship. As this is, in one way or another, granted by all, no pains will be taken to prove it. *Secondly.* A general association is of all methods the most likely to lessen the difference of opinion among the orthodox clergy, and to terminate forever that spirit of jealousy and variance, which has so long disturbed them. A little knowledge of mankind is sufficient to convince us, that the present state of separation, distance, and reserve, tends to increase, rather than to remove their discord in matters of faith. If their discord is an evil; if an increasing harmony among them is a blessing worthy to be sought; let them come together, and see each other's face. With respect to every point in debate, let them fully explain their different terms and apprehensions, and engage in the most open and friendly discussion. Let them strive to communicate and to receive light, to disclose lurking errors, and to confirm the common faith. Let them jointly defend that scheme of truth, and jointly promote that experimental religion, which is precious to them all; and let

them unite in fervent prayer to the Author of light and love. Such means, perseveringly used, have never been in vain. The truth is not covered with a veil which cannot be taken away; nor are the hearts of gospel ministers incapable of being meliorated by light, and warmed with brotherly affection.

3. It is said, *that such assemblies of clergymen naturally go into notions of ecclesiastical power, and aspire after an unchristian domination.*

Reply. It is acknowledged, that this has been the case in former times. But how much soever the influence of ministerial associations or assemblies has been abused; this is no argument against employing them for wise and benevolent purposes. Suppose a particular clergyman has taken advantage of his superior influence to trample on his brethren, and to infringe the privileges of the churches. Does this prove that ministerial influence is in itself an evil, or that it may not be made subservient to the best purposes? How often has civil authority been abused? Yet who will pretend that this is a reason why it should not be supported? This well illustrates the subject before us, if we carefully remember, that ministerial or Christian influence is, properly, *the influence of truth, of wisdom, and of prayer.* In this sense, the influence of ministers is as necessary to the welfare of the church, as civil authority is to the interests of civil society. With what propriety can evangelical ministers be suspected of aspiring after ecclesiastical dominion, because they endeavour, by union and

joint consultation, to increase their knowledge, their piety, and their usefulness, and to advance the good of Christ's kingdom? The ministry in this State, precluded from wealth and power, have no opportunity, and it is believed, no inclination to obtain any influence, but that of truth and goodness. Animated by the spirit of Christianity, and taught by the experience of past ages, they will, we doubt not, seasonably and watchfully guard the proposed general union against every pernicious tendency.

4. It is further urged by way of objection, that a general association in distinction from the general Convention is needless, and, without the approbation of that body, would be dangerous. Jealousies, animosities, and obloquies are apprehended, as the natural consequences.

**Reply.** No objection of this kind can be reasonably urged, unless the general association interfere with the business of the Convention. But the slightest examination will show, that there is no interference. The business of Convention is highly important; but it must be very restricted. So various are the objects of attention on that public occasion, and so small is the number of ministers commonly present, that little information can be obtained respecting the state of the churches, and little can be done for the general interests of religion. How can the most ardent friend of Convention be dissatisfied, if ministers, still maintaining their connexion with that body, think it proper to meet at a different time, and for different purposes; purposes, however, which do not

infringe the rights, nor diminish the usefulness of that respectable association. Surely the refusal of the Convention to encourage a general association was not meant to lay any prohibition upon individuals. Particular ministers or associations have liberty to form any ministerial connexion they choose, provided it be not inconsistent with the charitable object of the Convention. If any should attempt to deprive them of this liberty, they would show that spirit of domination, a tendency to which they so hastily suspect, and so resolutely condemn in others.

5. Only one more objection will be noted. It has been said, that we ought to know beforehand not only the outlines of the proposed plan, but its particular ends, rules, &c. in order that we may judge whether it is expedient to encourage it.

I observe, in reply, that it does not belong to an individual, who advocates the general object, to enter into all these particulars. And if those, who have already met with a view to a general association, should proceed at once to agree upon an ecclesiastical constitution; it might be thought unseasonable and injudicious, and prevent, instead of facilitating the addition of other associations. As it is designed, that the general association shall embrace the great body of orthodox ministers in Massachusetts; it is best that they should come together for deliberation, and that the particular rules adopted, the measures to be pursued, and the direction given to the whole business should be the result of their united wisdom. The greater the number of discerning,

pious characters collected, the more likely will they be to devise a plan, which will promote the interests of Christianity.

This, then, is the drift and conclusion of the whole. The common practice of men, especially Christians, the present state of the ministry and of the churches, and the genuine spirit of Christianity are considerations, which strongly urge to a general association in this commonwealth. The objections raised against it will not, we conceive, on candid examination, appear of sufficient force to invalidate the arguments in its favour. The foundation is already laid by a respectable number of associations in the western counties, who have met several times with the general union in view, and are taking prudent measures to facilitate the admission of other associations. The proposition has been respectfully laid before the Convention of Congregational ministers, who, as a Convention, thought it not best to adopt any measures in its favour, though a large part, then present, were friendly to the object. The way is now prepared for the admission of particular associations. There is nothing to debar any, who receive the great doctrines of the reformation. The union will take place on a basis, which includes all the essential articles of the orthodox faith. The next annual meeting will be at Windsor, on the last Wednesday of June, 1807.

*Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Je-*

*sus Christ be with the ministers and churches of Massachusetts!*

PASTOR.

#### PIETY OF PRIMITIVE NEW ENGLAND RULERS.

THE piety of the primitive *rulers* of New England is as worthy of notice, as the piety of the primitive ministers. The following directions, extracted from "Instructions for Maj. Benjamin Church, commander in chief of the Plymouth forces, &c. does honour to the religious characters of the commissioners whose names are undersigned.

" You are to take effectual care that the worship of God be kept up in the army, morning and evening prayer attended as far as may be, and as the emergencies of your affairs will permit, to see that the holy Sabbath be duly sanctified. You are to take care as much as may be, to prevent or punish drunkenness, swearing, cursing, or such other sins, as do provoke the anger of God. You are from time to time to give intelligence to the Governor and Council of Massachusetts or Commissioners of the Colonies of your proceedings, and the occurrences which may happen, and how it shall please the Lord to deal with you in this present expedition," &c.

THOMAS DANFORTH, *Pres.*  
ELISHA COOKE,  
SAMUEL MASON,  
WILLIAM PITKIN,  
THOMAS HINKLEY,  
JOHN WALLEY.

Similar directions were given by Governors Phipps, Stoughton, and Dudley.

## ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

In a Series of Letters to a Friend.

(Continued from p. 455.)

## LETTER II.

*The Doctrine illustrated, proved, and defended from Scripture.*

DEAR SIR,

THAT Christ died for sinners of mankind is often expressly asserted in the Scriptures. "When we were sinners, Christ died for us. He suffered for us in the flesh. He laid down his life for his sheep." This is granted by all, who bear the name of Christians. But some pretend that no more may be meant, than that Christ died for our benefit, as a martyr or witness to the truth of the revelation he made of the will of God; as an example of patience, fortitude, and charity, under cruel and abusive treatment; and that his resurrection might be to us an assuring evidence of his divine mission, and a pledge of the resurrection of the dead. We readily acknowledge that the death of Christ was designed for our benefit in these and other respects. But this does by no means come up to the intended meaning of the sacred writers. The phrase, here used, properly signifies in the original, that Christ died in the *room* and *stead* of sinners. This is evidently the meaning of the phrase in Paul's epistle to Philemon; in which he says that he would have retained Onesimus with him "that (*ὑπὲρ σοῦ*) *in thy stead* he might minister to me." That this is the sense, in which Christ died for us, that is, as substituted instead of those, who were condemned

to die, is ascertained by our Saviour's words. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." A ransom is what is given and accepted instead of the person ransomed. This ransom was the life of Christ, his dying in our stead, to save us from that death, to which we were condemned for our own sins. This ransom was given (*αὐτὶ*) substituted instead of the many, who are ransomed by his death. This is the exact import of the words in the original Greek, as the great masters of that language agree. Even the most learned Socinians, however reluctantly, have seemed at least to acknowledge this; though they have taken much fruitless pains to evade the plain and obvious consequence.

The words of the apostle are no less determinate. "He gave himself (*αυτιλυτρόν*) a *vicarious ransom*." The expression is remarkable, and exceedingly emphatical. Christ gave himself, his life, a *ransom*, a price of redemption. This implies that his death was *instead* of that of the redeemed. But the expression is strengthened, by its being termed a *vicarious or substituted ransom for* (*ὑπὲρ*) *instead of all* the redeemed. May it not now be taken for proved, that, according to the Scriptures, Christ died in the *room* of sinners, that by his *vicarious* sufferings and death he might ransom or redeem them from death, to which as sinners they were liable, and justly condemned.

Farther; the Scriptures teach us that "*death is the wages of sin*," that is, its deserved and threatened punishment. It was

[April,

sin, that brought death into the world. It is sin, that has subjected all mankind to that condemnation, to redeem or ransom them from which, Christ died in their room and stead. No one is liable to receive the wages or punishment of sin, unless it be for sin, as the meritorious cause. Now it is certain that, when Christ died in our stead to ransom us from death, he received the wages, or punishment of sin in our stead. For what is death, the curse of the law, but the punishment of sin? Christ did die in our stead, that he might ransom us from death. *He was made a curse*, or bore the curse of the law for us, that is, in our stead, that he might *redeem us from the curse of the law*. It is true, a person may suffer that, which is threatened in a law, as a punishment, and yet not suffer it as a punishment. The cutting off some member of the body is a legal punishment for some crimes. But, if this be done by a surgeon to stop a gangrene, the patient would not suffer it as a punishment. But Christ, in dying for us not only suffered, what was threatened as the punishment of sin, but he suffered *for sin*. The apostle Peter says that *Christ suffered for sins*, the just for the unjust. Now, if Christ suffered the punishment of sin *for sin*; if he bore the curse of the law *for sin*, (indeed how could he otherwise be subject to the curse, and punishment?) how can the conclusion be refused, that he was punished for sin? How can a person's being punished be more accurately and logically expressed, than by saying he suffers what is threatened, as the punishment of sin, *for sin*?

Those divines, who speak of Christ, as having suffered the punishment of sin, have not only "followed one another," but have also followed the apostles, and speak as the oracles of God. And if Christ suffered the punishment of *sin for sin*, can it be denied, that the sin, for which he suffered punishment, was imputed to him? Was any one ever punished for a crime, unless it was imputed to him? But it was not for any sin of his own, that Christ received the wages of sin, and bore the curse of the law. For there was no sin in him. He was tempted, as we are, yet without sin: He did no sin: He did always those things, that pleased God, who was ever well pleased in his beloved Son. It was *for our sins* that he suffered and died, and bore the punishment due to us. Paul says that he died *for our sins* according to the Scriptures. He was delivered unto death *for our offences*. His death was the deserved and threatened punishment of our sins, and he suffered this punishment *for our sins*. Is not this a clear evidence, that our sins were imputed, and our guilt transferred to him?

Of this we have also, I think, a farther proof in the 53d chapter of Isaiah. The prophet, speaking of Christ, says, "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." These griefs and sorrows are termed ours, because deserved by us, and due to us, as the wages or punishment of our sins, though they were borne by

Christ. Since he for our transgressions and iniquities, as the meritorious cause, was wounded, bruised, and suffered the punishment due to us ; what can be a plainer and more necessary inference, than that our obligation to suffer this punishment was transferred to him, and he took it on himself ; that is, in other words, that our guilt was *imputed* to him. This is also plainly expressed in the next verse, "the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all." Our sins were not infused into him, for in him was no sin, but they were laid upon him, judicially charged upon him, or as it is expressed in the Hebrew, they met or rushed upon him. No words could better express, what is meant by imputation. The prophet adds, "he was cut off from the earth, (but it was not for himself) he was stricken for the transgressions of God's people." The chastisement of our peace (by which our peace was made with God, or by which our peace or happiness was obtained for us) was inflicted upon him ; and born by him. And again, "My righteous servant shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities," i. e. bear the guilt, the burden, or punishment of them. And yet again, "He bare the sins of many." The guilt of these sins must therefore have been laid or charged upon him. How else could he bear it ? And yet farther, it is said that "*His soul was to be made an offering,*" a sacrifice of atonement for sin, and so be substituted in the place of sinners, to die in their stead, and bear the punishment due to them, as was represented in atoning sacrifices.

The variety of expression, used by the prophet on this subject, in order to ascertain his meaning, and preclude every evasion, seems worthy of remark. But men are not easily persuaded to give up a favourite hypothesis. Words are often so ambiguous and flexible, that ingenious critics will bend and adjust them to a different meaning from what they most obviously express. Yours,

*A Christian of the Ancient School.*

(To be continued.)

ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM AN  
AGED MINISTER.

No. 5.

Dear Sir,

WHEN my last was broken off, I was going to add a hint of preferring those writers who do the best justice to the Scripture doctrine of the fall of man, and the great revolution it has produced, with reference to our moral state ; the ground of our hopes toward God ; the redemption and recovery we want, and I might have said, in the whole of our religion. For "as one kind of regimen (says bishop Sherlock) "is adapted to preserve a good constitution, and another to restore a broken one," so it is here. A great part of the mistakes, which learned men have committed in theology, may be traced to their not keeping this distinction sufficiently in their view. And, as when we read Pope's Essay on Man (so striking and beautiful in many respects) we are surprised to find not a single hint of a defection from primitive rectitude which has degraded our species ; so we are more or less disappointed in many theological writers ; and

consequently in their systems at large.

Sometimes, indeed, we meet with an extreme in the other way ; and man's depraved condition set out with a kind of romantic extravagance. But this does not promote conviction. It diminishes the credit of the preacher, and raises a prejudice against *the truth*. Happy the student by whom the straight line marked by the simple doctrine of Revelation, is well distinguished, and well kept.— I am, &c.

*My dear Sir,*

No. 6.

WHEN I think of you, an idea occurs afresh, which, though very simple, I have often thought might be of great use for every student in theology, viz. that of *applying chiefly to the very heart of it*.—I mean to include all which relates to that conviction of sin, which is preparatory to real religion ; the mistakes and the dangers, to which the awakened are exposed ; the directions suitable for them ; the source from which their encouragements should be derived ; the views and the submissions, they must be brought to :—after these the nature of true conversion ; the difference between common and effectual operations of the Divine Spirit on the minds of men ; the specific nature of saving faith, repentance unto life, true love to God, and love to man in its distinct branches ; the distinguishing nature of Christian hope, joy, humility, self-denial, every grace ; and evangelical obedience at large.

In these the life and substance of theology seem emphatically to consist. And yet it often happens, that preachers of con-

siderable talents appear not to have bestowed a due proportion of their time upon them :—The outlines perhaps have had some justice done to them, but the *interior* has been too much postponed.

Upon this last branch of inquiry, I think you will find as much in President Edwards, on Religious Affections, as in any author I have seen ; and as able and thorough an examination of the Scriptures. I am, &c.

(To be continued.)

#### THE DECALOGUE. No. 10.

##### TENTH COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.”

No nation can produce a system of moral and religious precepts so perfect as that which was given to Israel from Mount Sinai. It will bear the strictest examination, and when reduced to practice it preserves us in the way of holiness. The apostate Emperor knew this, but anxious to find defects, where none exist, he could only say, *that the law contains things too simple and too trite for so high an origin.* What he says in detraction, is a high eulogium. It admits, without designing it, that the law is accommodated to the meanest understanding, and thus answers the great purpose of instructing and reforming mankind. Our duty to God and to man is here brought into one point of view. The system is pure and complete. Formed on this model, a religious and useful race would

arise venerating Jehovah's name, and seeking the welfare of fellow creatures.

The tenth commandment "is placed as the fence of all the rest. The apostle's reference to it, (Rom. vii. 7, 8.) shows that it comprises the utmost spirituality of the law; and it is a perpetual confutation of all those systems, by which the outward, gross crime is considered as the only violation of each command. We are here expressly, and in the most forcible language, prohibited so much as to *desire* what is withheld from us by the command or providence of God: and so far from levelling property, or seizing violently on our neighbour's possessions, we may not so much as at all hanker after them. The most secret wish for another man's wife violates this precept: but to desire an union with an unmarried woman, only becomes sinful when it is excessive, and when it is not submitted to the will of God, if he render it impracticable. We may desire that part of a man's property, which he is inclined to dispose of, if we mean to obtain it only on equitable terms: but what he chooses to keep, we may not covet. The poor man may desire moderate relief from the rich: but he must not covet his affluence, nor repine even if he do not relieve him. Men, exposed to equal hazards, may agree to a proportionable contribution to him who suffers loss; for it accords with the law of love to help the distressed. This exculpates *insurance*, when fairly conducted. But every species of *gaming* originates from an undue desire and hope of increasing our property, by proportion-

ably impoverishing other men; and is therefore a direct violation of this law. Public gaming, by lotteries, so far from being less criminal than other species of that vice, is the worst of them all: for it abets and sanctions, as far as example and concurrence can do it, a practice which opens the door to every species of fraud and villany; which is pregnant with the most extensive evils to the community and to individuals; which seldom fails annually to bring several to an untimely end by suicide or the sentence of the law; which unsettles an immense multitude from the honest employments of their station, to run in quest of imaginary wealth; and which exposes them to manifold temptations, unfits them for returning to their usual mode of life, and often materially injures their circumstances, breaks their spirits, sours their tempers, and excites the worst passions of which they are susceptible. Indeed, the evils, political, moral, and religious, of lotteries are too glaring to be denied even by those who plead *necessity* for continuing them; and too numerous to be recapitulated in this place. Can it therefore consist with the law of God, "Thou shalt not covet," or with the character of a Christian, to concur in such an iniquitous and injurious system, from a vain desire of irregular gain? Whatever argument proves it unlawful for two or three men to cast lots for a sum of money, or to game in any other way, much more strongly concludes against a million of persons gaming publicly by a lottery for a month or six weeks together, to the stagna-

tion in great measure of every other business : whilst the gain made by government and by individuals, from the stakes deposited with them, renders it as imprudent, as it is sinful in the adventurers ; for every individual stakes *three to two on an even chance*, if a covetous appeal to Providence may be called chance. (Prov. xvi. 33.) Even *Tontines* seem not wholly excusable, as they constitute a kind of complicated wager about longevity, to be decided by Providence in favour of the survivors ; and must therefore partake of the nature of other games of chance. Coveting other men's property contrary to the law of love, and enriching the survivors, commonly at the expense of the relatives of the deceased, are intimately connected with them : whilst they lead men into strong temptations secretly to wish the death of others, for the sake of advantages, which they inordinately desire and irregularly pursue. In fine, discontent, distrust, love of wealth, pleasure, and grandeur, desire of change, the habit of wishing, and every inordinate

affection, are the evils here prohibited ; and we know them to be the sources of all other crimes, and of man's misery. And the command requires moderation in respect of all worldly things, submission to God, acquiescence in his will, love to his commands, and a reliance on him for the *daily* supply of all our wants, as he sees good. This is right and reasonable, fit for God to command, and profitable for man to obey, the very temper and felicity of heaven itself : but it is so contrary to the disposition of our heart by nature, and so superior to the actual attainment of the best Christians on earth, that it is very difficult to persuade men in general, that God requires such perfection ; still more difficult to satisfy them, that it is indispensable to the happiness of rational creatures ; and most difficult of all to convince them that every thing inconsistent with, or short of, this *is sin* ; that it deserves the wrath of God, and cannot be taken away, except by the mercy of God, thro' the atonement of Christ."\*

PHILOLOGOS.

## Selections.

### THE EFFECTS OF TEMPORIZING IN MATTERS OF RELIGION, EXEMPLIFIED IN THE CON- DUCT OF ERASMUS.

(Continued from page 424.)

"THERE was at this time a certain preacher at Constance, who consulted Erasmus by Botzem, how the reformation might best be advanced. Erasmus an-

swered, that they who imagined themselves to have as great abilities for settling those Christian truths, which concern all men and all times, as they had for a theological compotation, or a little scholastic dispute, were infinitely mistaken. Truth, says he, is efficacious and invincible, but it must be dispensed with evangelical prudence. For my-

\* Scott's Commentaries.

self, I so abhor divisions, and so love concord, that I fear, if an occasion presented itself I should sooner give up a part of truth, than disturb the public peace.

" But the mischief is, that a man cannot thus give up truth, without running into falsehood, and assenting to things, which he doth not believe. For a man cannot judge that to be right, which his own reason pronounces to be false, only because overbearing persons attack the truth with more vehemence, than he chooseth to employ in defence of it, and are the majority and the stronger party. Besides, when such enemies to reason and to religion perceive that a man will not have the courage to defend his opinions at all extremities, which Erasmus confessed to be his own disposition, they never fail to take advantage of him, to oppress him, and to run him down, well knowing that nothing is necessary to accomplish their purposes besides stubbornness, clamour, impudence, and violence. And so spiritual tyranny, being once erected, would endure forever, and gain strength and stability. Concord and peace are unquestionably valuable blessings ; but yet not to be purchased at the expense of truth and liberty, which are infinitely more estimable than a sordid tranquillity beneath the yoke of falsehood and arbitrary dominion. Beneath this yoke the Christian republic becomes a mere faction of poltroons, solicitous about enjoying the present, and neglecting every thing that is laudable under the pretext of preserving the peace. Such would have been the present state of Chris-

tianity, if the pacific scheme of Erasmus had been received and pursued. Divisions, it must be owned, do much harm ; yet they have at least produced this good, that the truth of the gospel, and a Christian liberty, which acquiesceth only in the decisions of Jesus Christ, are not entirely banished from the face of the earth, as they would have been without those struggles of our ancestors. They have produced no small service to the memory of Erasmus himself, who, having his works condemned by theological cabals, and mangled by inquisitions, which struck out the most valuable part of his writings, would have been stigmatized and proscribed through all ages, if a party had not risen up in Europe and also amongst his own countrymen, which willingly forgives him his weaknesses and irresolution, for the sake of his useful labours, philological and theological ; and hath restored to him a second life and recommended him to the Christian world, by an elegant and faithful edition of all his works.

" But let us hear some more of his advice. ' This preacher, says he, who certainly is a worthy man, will do more service to the gospel, the honour of which we all have at heart, if he takes care to join the prudence of the evangelical serpent to the simplicity of the evangelical dove. Let him essay it ; and then let him condemn my counsel, if he finds it not to be salutary.'

" Alas ! experience hath taught the Christian world, that this same serpentine prudence served to make falsehood triumphant. It was even easy to fore-

see it, since this wisdom consisted only in submitting to that faction, which was the most powerful and the most obstinate.

"Erasmus entertained some hopes, that his old friend and school fellow Adrian VI. would do some good as he testifies in this letter: but, says he, 'if I should be mistaken in this, I will not be factious. As to the preacher's last question, are we to abandon and give up the whole gospel? I reply; they may be said to abandon the gospel, who defend it in an improper manner. Besides; with what reserve and slow caution did our Lord himself discover his doctrine?'

"All this in some sense may be right; but then our Saviour never said any thing contrary to the truth; and when the time was come for it, he laid down his life in confirmation of it; which is more than Erasmus is inclined to do, as he himself frankly confesseth. It cannot be called defending the gospel to refer it to the arbitration of a set of Ecclesiastics, whom all the world knew to be either ill instructed, or ill disposed, or both."

We may add in a future No. a letter from Luther to Erasmus in the year 1524, which sets in a striking light, the different characters of those two great men.

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The following is taken from a discourse entitled, *A most faithful sermon preached before King Edward VI. and his most honourable Counsell, in his Court at Westminster, by the Reverend father M. Hugh Latimer. An. 1550.* It pointedly exposes the folly of those, who attributed the

civil discord of the preceding summer to the preaching of Protestants. The orthography of the age is retained.

"BUT here is now an argument to prove the matter against the preachers. Here was preaching against covetousnes all the last yeare in *Lent*, and the next sommer followed rebellion: *Ergo*, preaching against covetousnes was the cause of the rebellion. A goodly argument. Here now I remember an argument of maister Moore's, which he bringeth in a booke, that he made against *Bilney*,\* and here by the way I will tell you a mery toy. Maister Moore was once sent in commission into *Kent*, to help to try out, if it might be, what was the cause of *Goodwin sandes*, and the shelle, that stopped up *Sandwich haven*. Thether cometh maister Moore, and calleth the countrie before him, such as were thought to be men of experience, and men that could in likelihode best certify him of that matter, concerning the stopping of *Sandwich haven*. Among others came in before him an olde man with a white head, and one that was thought to be little less than an hundereth years *olde*. When maister Moore saw this aged man, he thought it expedient to heare him say his minde in this matter (for being so olde a man it was likely that he knew most of any man in that presence & company.) So maister Moore called this olde aged man unto him, and sayd: father (sayd he) tell me if ye can what is the cause of this great arising of the sandes and shelves here about this haven,

\* Bilney was a Protestant writer, by the perusal of whose writings, Latimer was converted from popery.

the which stop it up that no shippes can arrive here? Ye are the eldest man that I can espie in all this company, so that if any man can tell any cause of it, ye of likelihode can say most in it, or at leastwise more than any man here assembled. Yea forsooth good maister (quod this olde man) for I am well nigh an hundred years olde, and no man here in this company any thing neare unto mine age. Well then (quod maister Moore) how say you in this matter? What thinke ye to be the cause of these shelves and flattes, that stoppe up Sandwich haven? Forsooth syr (quod he) I am an olde man, I think that *Tenterton steeple* is the cause of Goodwin sandes. For I am an old man syr (quod he) and I may remember the building of *Tenterton steeple*, and I may remember when there was no steeple at all there, and before that Tenterton steeple was in building, there was no manner of speaking of any flattes or sandes, that stopped the haven, and therefore I thinke that Tenterton steeple is the cause of the destroying and decaying of Sandwich haven. And even so to my purpose is preaching of God's worde the cause of rebellion, as Tenterton steeple was the cause, that Sandwich haven is decayed. And is not this a gaye matter, that such should be taken for great wise men, that will thus reason against the preacher of God's worde?"

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#### *THE NEGRO'S COMPLAINT.*

Forc'd from home and all its pleasure,  
Afric's coast I left forlorn,  
To increase a stranger's treasure  
O'er the raging billows borne.  
No. 11. Vol. II.      T t t

Men from England bought and sold  
me,  
Paid my price in paltry gold,  
But, though theirs they have enroll'd  
me,  
Minds are never to be sold.

Still in thought as free as ever,  
What are England's rights, I ask,  
Me from my delights to sever,  
Me to torture, me to task.

Fleecy locks and black complexion  
Cannot forfeit Nature's claim;  
Skin may differ, but affection  
Dwells in black and white the same.

Why did all-creating Nature  
Make the plant for which we toil?  
Sighs must fan it, tears must water,  
Sweat of ours must dress the soil.

Think, ye masters, iron-hearted,  
Lolling at your jovial boards,  
Think how many backs have smarted,  
For the sweets your cane affords.

Is there, as you sometimes tell us,  
Is there One who reigns on high?  
Has he bid you buy and sell us,  
Speaking from his throne, the sky?

Ask him if your knotted scourges,  
Fetters, blood extorting screws,  
Are the means which duty urges  
Agents of his will to use.

Hark! he answers; wild tornadoes  
Strewing yonder sea with wrecks,  
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,  
Are the voice with which he speaks.

He foreseeing what vexation  
Afric's sons should undergo;  
Fix'd their tyrants' habitations,  
Where his whirlwinds answer—No.

By our blood in Afric wasted,  
Ere our necks receiv'd the chain;  
By the mis'ries which we tasted,  
Crossing in your barks, the main;

By our sufferings since you bro't us  
To the man-degrading mart,  
All sustain'd by patience, taught us  
Only by a broken heart.

Deem our nation brutes no longer,  
Till some reason you shall find,  
Worthier of regard and stronger  
Than the colour of our kind.

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Slaves of gold ! whose sordid deal-  
ings,  
Tarnish all your boasted pow'rs,

Prove that you have human feelings,  
Ere you proudly question ours.  
*Cowper.*

## Miscellaneous.

*For the Panoplist.*

### ON THE STATE OF LITERATURE IN NEW ENGLAND.

(Continued from p. 473.)

IN the Colleges of New England a change is observable, and one which will appear of no small moment to the friends of sound erudition. The severer studies have regained that ground, which a number of years since, they were forced to abandon to that light and frothy stuff, which, under a hundred names, our booksellers' shops were pouring upon the public. The taste was lately to reject the study of the languages, and the mathematics, as fit only for pedants and laborious plodders, and totally beneath the attention of a man of genius. The student's library was a strange medley of extracts, compilations, and abridgements, plays, travels, and romances, which, however they might have become the chamber of a fine lady, suffered not a little, when compared with the classical dignity of their predecessors. Now the tables are turned. Scholars may be found who are not ashamed to confess that they derive great pleasure from the perusal of the ancient classics. It would now be no discredit to own one's self delighted with Xenophon, or Longinus, or to believe that, for accurate views of

human nature, a just account of heathen morality, or an example of what the human mind can perform, Cicero stands almost without a rival. The Mathematics, also, which had been exiled without a hearing, have been recalled, and enjoy nearly their former elevated situation. In short, a very great change is visible in our higher seminaries of learning, from superficial to solid studies, from those which are frivolous and effeminate, to those which nerve the man for vigorous action.

It ought not to be passed in silence, that inferior schools have here been set on a more respectable footing, than, perhaps, in any other quarter of the world. The Legislatures of some of the New England States have manifested a truly paternal regard toward the education of all the children in the community. And so extensively is this blessing spread, that few might not, if disposed, acquire a knowledge sufficient to transact the ordinary business of life, to enjoy much satisfaction in the perusal of salutary books, and to become useful citizens of a free country.

We may also congratulate ourselves that the philosophical jargon, which made so much noise a few years since, and threatened to turn the literary and moral world upside down, has fallen into the most pointed neglect and

contempt. Nobody now reads those works which were pretended to be unanswerable in favour of the New Philosophy. Infidels themselves do not trouble their heads about them. As they were equally unintelligible to the learned and ignorant, the elevated and humble, they are quietly gone into oblivion, without leaving friends enough to mourn their loss. This might have been augured to be their end, even in the full run of their popularity; for the great body of mankind will never be prevailed upon, for any considerable length of time, to read what they do not understand, and what affords not the least nourishment to their minds. Those who ever did peruse the works, to which I refer, with much attention, were influenced by motives very similar to those by which Dr. Johnson represents the English populace as induced to read the letters of Junius; viz. "that those who did not know what he meant, hoped he meant rebellion."

The event has been much the same with respect to that species of poetry, which answers to the philosophy in prose. The day of the authors is over; their magical spell has lost its force; and posterity will never hear of Della Crusca, Southey, and a host of other pretenders of less note, whose names, even now, it is difficult to recollect. *Their memorial has perished with them.* Attempts of this sort, when compared with productions of true merit, resemble meteors, which, though they may dazzle children for an evening, lose all their fascinating glare, when the sun rises in his strong and beautiful effulgence.

Another change, perhaps as widely extended through all classes of society, as any which I have mentioned, has been gradually wrought in the public taste with regard to novels. The time, we can easily remember, when these pernicious and corrupting books were almost universally diffused. The mischief which they introduced was incalculable. Idleness and false notions of life were always in their train, evils of no small magnitude; but not unfrequently they occupied the mind almost exclusively, rendered it indisposed to serious reflection, and became subservient to seduction and impurity, purposes to which they were but too well adapted. Printed on the coarsest paper, with marble covers, they were found in the cottage; and constructed of the most costly materials, they decorated the libraries of the opulent. The mechanic and the day-labourer stole time to read them; the belle and the house-maid were equally engaged in their perusal, except that the one had her toilet laden with them, and the other was not quite so abundantly furnished. They were even quite a prevalent topic of fashionable conversation, and ignorance of them was counted ignorance of everything delightful. But now we scarcely see them, or hear of them; they seem vanished with the dreams which they contain. If this assertion be doubted, let the appeal be made to booksellers, and no one will doubt the justness of this criterion. The correction of the public taste, in so important a respect, must be regarded as an event peculiarly auspicious.

While we remark these alter-

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ations for the better, we ought not to be unmindful of the causes, nor ungrateful for the labours which produced them. Altho' common sense would not long continue in absolute slavery to the vitiated taste, which a short time ago prevailed; yet we could by no means have hoped for so speedy a deliverance, if vigorous efforts had not been made. A host of serious, powerful writers have arisen, on both sides of the Atlantic, as champions of truth and virtue. Their works have been extensively spread in this country, the sale of them having increased in a direct proportion, as that of light and per-

nicious books has diminished. Among these valuable publications, the works of Mrs. More have been very efficacious. Her condescension in writing for the reformation of the humble and illiterate;\* her noble firmness in reprehending the follies, prejudices, and wickedness of the great; the irresistible cogency of her reasoning against cavillers; and the severity of her reproofs to the licentious and profane, are equally conspicuous, have been equally useful, equally show the courage of a Christian, and prove her title to whatever is great and good in the human character.

C. Y. A.

(To be continued.)

## Review of New Publications.

*Preparation for war the best security for peace. Illustrated in a sermon, delivered before the ancient and honourable Artillery Company, on the anniversary of their election of officers, Boston, June 2, 1806. By JAMES KENDALL, A. M. minister of the first church in Plymouth. Boston. Munroe & Francis. 1806.*

Few sermons are introduced more beautifully, than this. The sketch of Hezekiah's administration, selected for a text, 2 Chron. xxxii. 5—8, is peculiarly adapted to the author's purpose. He manifests uncommon ingenuity in deriving from that historical sketch most important and appropriate hints respecting the present situation of our country, and the duty of

magistrates in times of public danger. In every part the sermon shows marks of lively genius and cultivated taste. The following character of a good soldier affords a favourable specimen of the author's talents, and presents a model worthy of devout imitation.

"To strengthen the confidence of his fellow citizens, a soldier, besides being acquainted with the military art, must be fired with a love of his country. No man who is not a patriot can be fit for a soldier. Without he be animated with a spirit of patriotism, he has no claim to the confidence of his country. If he should possess this confidence, he would be liable to abuse it by becoming a traitor. But if he be a patriot, "not in word only, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth," he will always be influenced by a regard to the public good. He will rise superior to any local or party attachments, and

\* A large proportion of the excellent and useful work, entitled "Cheap Repository Tracts," was from the pen of this pious and ingenious lady.

never suffer himself to become the dupe, or the instrument of a faction. His *patriot breast* will disdain to harbour a spirit, that would immolate one half of his countrymen with the hope of ruling and reigning with the rest. Equally inimical will he be to that boasted philanthropy, whose colossal strides to fraternize the whole world, are stained with the blood and covered with the victims of all its parts. His benevolence for his kind will never wage war with his affection for his kindred. His friends are the friends of his country, and he is an enemy to those only, who are at war with its rights and liberties. The language of his heart is, and the same is inscribed upon every enterprise, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

"When a knowledge of the military art is animated by a spirit of patriotism, it will seldom fail of being accompanied with true valour. This is another essential requisite in the character of a soldier. Not that courage, however, which would lead a man rashly and unnecessarily to expose his life to danger. Not that mistaken passion, which, rather than endure the adversities of life, tempts a man to lay violent hands upon himself. Not that false, impious courage, which under the influence of personal revenge, sooner than lose the pleasure of quenching the fire of resentment in the blood of a fellow soldier, looks to heaven, and challenges Omnipotence to preserve that life, which it has challenged man to destroy..... But that true bravery, which, in obedience to the call of its country, prefers the post of duty, although it be in the high road to danger and to death, to dishonourable flight, or dastardly obscurity. That active, persevering valour, that never sleeps when its country is in danger...is never weary in vindicating her rights and defending her liberties against the encroachments and usurpation of avarice and ambition. That magnanimity that cheerfully sacrifices private ease and emolument to public security, to national prosperity and happiness. That heroic fortitude that nobly dares to com-

bat public error and vice, although it be at the expense of public favour, choosing rather to fall in the support and defence of national virtue, than to rise on the flood of national corruption and wickedness.

"This is a noble characteristic of a soldier. It is something different from that mechanical courage that is acquired in a crowd, or from calculations upon chance. It is something distinct from that hardihood, which arises from general insensibility to evil and to good. However useful this kind of bravery may be under the direction and management of a military despot; yet it is not that true valour, which excites admiration and inspires the greatest confidence. This is a virtue that arises from reflection; from a consideration of a greater good, than length of days; from a belief of an existence, that can neither be embittered nor destroyed by the wrath of man; from the hope of a reward for noble and virtuous actions, more sure and more lasting than national gratitude or popular favour; from the prospect of a crown more honorary and glorious than the laurels, which the hero gathers in the field of battle...more imperishable than the marble, on which is inscribed the conqueror's fame. This godlike virtue is the offspring of religion, and is nourished by piety. And we have said, that these are not only consistent with the character, but are the brightest ornaments, the most honourable insignia, the safest and most complete armour of a soldier.

"With these the pious king of Judah was adorned, and by them also he was strengthened. They gave beauty to his character, and energy and splendour to his actions. We admire and commend his vigilance and activity in fortifying his cities and preparing for resistance. But we venerate more his humility and piety in trusting in the God of Israel; and, in addition to his own exertions, repairing to the throne of the Most High, and beseeching Him, in a time of trouble and danger, to be the shield and refuge of his people. We applaud his wisdom and prudence in seasonably organizing his forces and amply furnishing them with instruments of defence. But we are charm-

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ed with the faith and confidence, he expressed, not merely in the height and strength of his walls, nor in the number and discipline of his troops ; but in the wisdom and strength of that ARM, which bringeth salvation, and getteth the victory. This was the ground of encouragement to his people....the great animating motive, by which he roused them to resistance, and inspired them with undaunted bravery against the enemy. "For there be more with us than with him : with him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles."

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*Sermons on various subjects, evangelical, devotional, and practical, adapted to the promotion of Christian piety, family religion, and youthful virtue.*  
By JOSEPH LATHROP, D. D.  
*Pastor of the first church in West Springfield.* Worcester.  
Isaiah Thomas, jun. 1806.

THAT the author of these sermons is a man of genius, an elegant writer, and a well informed divine, the public are already convinced by undeniable proof. Besides a large number of single discourses, three volumes of sermons had obtained an extensive circulation, before the publication of that under review. At the Doctor's age an access of reputation is not ordinarily to be expected ; but even in this respect he will lose nothing by the present work. The subjects are various, and many of them peculiarly interesting. From the first sermon, "On the folly of Atheism," we make the following extract.

"If it were true, that there is no God, what evidence can the Atheist have, that he shall not exist and be miserable after death ? How came he to exist at all ? Whatever was the

cause of his existence here, may be the cause of his existence hereafter. Or, if there is no cause, he may exist without a cause, in another state, as well as in this. And if his corrupt heart and abominable works make him so unhappy here, that he had rather be annihilated, than run the hazard of a future existence, what hinders but that he may be unhappy forever ? The man then is a fool, who wishes there were no God, hoping thus to be secure from future misery ; for, admitting that there were no God, still he may exist hereafter, as well as here ; and if he does exist, his corruptions and vices may render him miserable eternally, as well as for the present."

In the second discourse, the subject of which is "Enmity to Religion," the following objection is introduced, "The gospel is mysterious ; but if God gives men a revelation, he will give them one, which they can understand." To which the Doctor replies,

"It must be supposed, that a revelation from God relating to the invisible and eternal world, and to our preparation for an entrance into it, will contain some things, which, tho' intelligible as far as our practice is concerned, may yet be mysterious and incomprehensible in many unessential circumstances : for, indeed, almost every thing which we see, is so. Even the religion of nature contains as great and inscrutable mysteries, as the religion of the gospel. The eternity, self-existence, omnipresence, and foreknowledge of God are as inexplicable, as the doctrine of the Trinity. The connexion of body and mind in man is as mysterious, as the union of the divine and human natures in Christ. The influence of providence in supporting our frame, directing our motions, and overruling our actions is as unsearchable, as the influence of the Spirit in forming us to the temper, and assisting us to the duties of religion. The creation of the world and of the first man out of nothing, is as inconceivable to our reason, as the resurrection of the dead after their bodies are mingled with dust. If, then, we reject the gospel

because we find in it doctrines, which we cannot comprehend, we shall not long retain natural religion, whose doctrines are quite as incomprehensible. Every man who pretends to believe any thing about religion, must believe the eternity, omnipresence, foreknowledge and universal providence of God; the existence and immortality of a rational mind united to this mortal body; the creation of man by the immediate power of God; and our continual dependence on him for life and breath, and for all our abilities and pleasures. Without a belief of these grand truths, there is no foundation for religion. But if every thing mysterious is, for that reason, incredible, these must be discarded with the mysteries of the gospel. The infidel, who cavils at the latter, will not long spare the former."

To a sermon from these words, *Thou art good and dost good; teach me thy statutes,* the author has given the following title, *God's goodness the hope of the penitent; but no security to the finally impenitent.* In this sermon some of the popular arguments in favour of universal salvation are answered with great clearness and energy—

" You should always keep it in mind, that wickedness tends to misery, and must, if retained, finally terminate in it. The question, therefore, is not so much concerning God's immediate execution of punishment on sinners, as concerning their bringing misery on themselves. If you continue in your sins, and die in your impenitence, " know ye, that your sins will find you out, and your iniquities will fall upon you"—" His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself; he shall be holden in the cords of his sins." It is absurd to start cavils against, and study evasions of the divine threatenings, unless you can prove, that a wicked and ungodly life, followed with a hardened and impenitent death, is, in its nature, consistent with glory and happiness. Some, I suppose, will say, " If we are to judge of men's characters according to the tenor of the gospel, there is, and probably ever has been in the

world, a much greater number of sinners, than of saints; and it is not credible, that a merciful God will doom to misery so great a proportion of his intelligent creatures."

" But do you seriously think, that the number of sinners is a reason, why God will not punish any? If it is, then the greater the number, the stronger the reason for impunity. And consequently by promoting vice, you add to the general safety. I hope you will not act on such an opinion. Though the number of sinners be ever so great, and their combinations ever so strong, the wicked shall not go unpunished. If sin indulged in the heart, and practised in the life, not only deserves punishment from the justice of God, but tends to misery in its own nature, then the number of sinners is no security; for this will neither lessen sin's demerit, nor arrest its tendency. Though thousands should, at the same time, be afflicted with a painful disease, not one will feel his own pain alleviated by the sufferings of the rest. Vice is the disorder, as well as the guilt of the soul; and the disorder is the same, whether many or few are infected with it. The man tormented with envy, malice, pride, ambition, and avarice, is still tormented, though thousands of others may indulge the same passions. You may as well expect that a general famine will satisfy every man's hunger, as expect that general wickedness will prevent each one's misery. Vice will operate like itself in every one, who habitually practises it; and every one must bear his own burden. If numbers cannot turn vice into virtue, then numbers can be no defence against punishment. If it be just to punish one sinner, it is just to punish ten, or ten thousand. The number of sinners alters not the justice of the procedure. Human government may, on reasons of state, sometimes spare an offending multitude; but these reasons cannot operate with the Deity. His power is as sufficient to punish many as few. Though the whole human race should rebel, his throne stands firm. He needs not the services of his creatures; and if he did, the same power which created those who now exist, could supply by

a new creation the place of all who revolt."

In all ages the origin of evil seems to have been a subject of perplexing inquiry. No point, perhaps, in philosophy or metaphysics, has been more painfully investigated ; but the difficulties attending it have not disappeared. With regard to this subject, *God holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth a cloud upon it.* Dr. L. has briefly treated this subject, in a discourse which has this title ; *The sins and miseries of men, not God's doings, but their own.*

On the question of God's positive efficiency in the production of moral evil, our author, in agreement with the divines of the synod of Dort, and a large majority of those, who have been considered most orthodox, embraces the negative. He supposes, that it implies no contradiction, that God should communicate to man the power of originating some of his volitions. On this subject, we offer no opinion. We only express our wish that men on both sides would be careful not to misrepresent the sentiments of their opponents, and would govern themselves and seek to influence others by fair, scriptural reasoning. How various soever may be the sentiments of our readers on the question, they will agree, it is believed, that the discourse of which we are speaking, is written with candour and ingenuity. If the Doctor cannot satisfy, he seems resolved not to offend.

" On the question concerning the introduction of evil, we need go no farther, and we can go no farther, than our Saviour has gone." He says, " The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man, who sowed good seed in his field; and while men slept an en-

emy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him ; Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field ? From whence then hath it tares ? He said to them, an enemy hath done this." In the explanation of this parable, Jesus says, " The field is the world ; the good seed are the children of the kingdom ; but the tares are the children of the wicked one ; the enemy, that sowed them, is the devil." In tracing the introduction of evil, our Lord goes no farther ; and here our inquiries must be stayed. Had the householder judged it necessary, that his servants should know where this enemy goth his seed, or how he became so malicious, he would, on so fair an occasion, have instructed them further on the subject. He said no more upon it, because no more needed to be said. With this his servants were fully satisfied. It would be well, that we shoukl terminate our inquiries, where these modest servants terminated theirs."

The following, on a very different subject, is no common specimen of fine writing.

" Here we need the vicissitudes of day and night for labour and rest. The light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun. The night, though favourable to repose, is, however, a gloomy season. The gloom we endeavour to dispel by artificial lights. But in heaven there is no need of a candle, for there is no night there ; and no need of the sun, for the glory of the Lord doth lighten it, and Jesus is the light thereof. Here we have our seasons of sorrow and affliction. Our joys are transient. Our bright and happy days are interrupted with dark and stormy nights. Our smiling and cheerful suns are obscured by scowling and angry clouds. Death is stalking around—we see his frightful footsteps, we hear his hollow voice. We tremble for our children and friends ; we mourn the loss of brethren and companions ; we have no security for our most pleasing connexions ; we are doomed to suffer the anguish of their dissolution. In heav-

en things will be new. All friendship there will be the union of pure and immortal minds in disinterested benevolence to one another, and in supreme love to the all glorious Jehovah."

In the sixth particular of instruction, suggested by the story of the importunate friend, p. 215, are many valuable thoughts; but their connexion with the subject is less obvious, than could be desired. The close of the sermon is very impressive, and calculated to melt the backsliding Christian.

"Remember, my Christian friends, the kindness of your youth, the love of your espousals, when you went after Christ in the wilderness. Remember your former fears and distresses under a conviction of your sins. Remember what earnest applications you made to your Saviour, and what kind answers, in due time, you received. Remember what comfort you felt, when you could call him your Saviour and friend, and could appropriate the evidences and tokens of his love. Remember your former zeal for his service, and your professed dedication to him. Has your zeal languished, and your love waxed cold? Remember, how you have received and heard; how you have resolved and promised; and hold fast and repented."

"If sinners treat with indifference the calls and invitations of the Saviour; yet who would expect this from *you*? Did you not promise that you would be *holiness to the Lord*, and that all your works, like the first fruits, should be consecrated to him? What iniquity have ye found in him, that you should depart from him and walk after vanity? I beseech you by the mercies of Christ, by your own experience of his mercies, and by the promises, which you have made, that you present yourselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable, which is your reasonable service."

The twenty-first discourse is entitled, "The pernicious effects of an inflamed tongue."

*The tongue is a fire, &c.* James iii. 6. Bishop Latimer said of Jonah's message to the Ninevites, No. 11. Vol. II.      Uuu

"It was a nipping sermon, a pinching sermon, a biting sermon, a sharp biting sermon."\*

We know of no language more descriptive of the discourse under consideration. The reader may judge by the following specimen:

"There is one observation more, which, though not mentioned by our apostle, yet naturally arises from our subject; namely, that this infernal heat, which usually sets the tongue on fire, and renders it very voluble and loquacious, sometimes causes a swell and stiffness, which is accompanied by a sullen taciturnity. This symptom, though not so extensively mischievous, as the inflammation, which we have described, may be as painful to the patient, and as vexatious to the bystanders. We read of some, who were brought, by their friends, to our Saviour to be cured of their dumbness. Whether this dumbness was caused by the impotence of the organ, or by the wilfulness of the mind, it is not said. But whatever might be the immediate cause, there was a satanical operation at the bottom. The patients are expressly said to be "possessed of the devil," to have a "dumb spirit." And "when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake."

Few authors manifest a more productive genius, or more extensive theological information, than Dr. L. His mind, in no degree enervated by years, still displays its rich, undiminished treasures, to the improvement and joy of believers. His excellence, as an author, appears in his descriptive, practical, and devotional performances; rather than in those which are controversial. Though it ought to be acknowledged, that the sermons he has published against Deism and Atheism are potent and irresistible in point of argument.

\* See Latimer's sermon, delivered before king Edward 6th, 1550.

His style, though not perfectly free from faults, possesses, in a high degree, that ease, perspicuity, and force, which are so essential to pulpit oratory. Tho' we cannot say of Dr. Lathrop, nor perhaps of any writer, that

his style is a complete model; there are few works, which are better suited, than this, to regulate the taste of young men, who contemplate the ministry, and to form them to a manly, impressive, and divine eloquence.

## Religious Intelligence.

### RECENT COMMUNICATIONS FROM INDIA.

*"Our Magazine has never, probably, been the vehicle of intelligence more interesting and pleasing, than that which will be found in the following pages. No one who possesses any measure of the Christian spirit can fail to rejoice, when he sees that the Holy Scriptures, the words of eternal life, are likely soon to be translated into all the most important and extensive languages of the East, and to be read by the many millions of men who inhabit that most populous portion of our globe. Those of our countrymen who have liberally contributed to promote this benevolent enterprise, will receive some additional pleasure in reflecting, that as the sun of revelation rose in the East and pursued his course till this Western world was enlightened by his rays, so they have been, in a measure, instrumental in reflecting back his beams to the region on which they had first dawned, but from which they had been long and mournfully withdrawn."* As. Mag.

*To the Christian congregations in the United States, who have contributed their aid towards the translation of the Sacred Scriptures into the languages of the East.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

AMONG those principles implanted in the heart by the Holy Spirit, none is more amiable, more fully demonstrative of our being made partakers of the divine nature, or productive of more happy effects, than that of Christian love. This removes all distance of place, overlooks all peculiarities of name and denomination; and unites in the firmest bonds all those who serve the same Lord, causing them to bear each other's burdens,

and to participate with delight in those labours of each other which have for their object the glory of the Redeemer and the welfare of mankind.

These ideas have seldom been more fully impressed on our minds than when we heard of that instance of Christian liberality and attachment to the cause of the Redeemer, which you have exhibited in aid of the translation of the Sacred Scriptures into the languages of the East. Employed in a part of the globe so remote from you, and personally unknown to most of you, judge what were our feelings when we heard that you had, without the least solicitation on our part, interested yourselves in so effectual a manner, in that arduous yet delightful work, in which the Lord has bidden us engage for the sake of his people yet to be gathered from among the heathen.

For this display of Christian philanthropy we entreat you to accept our warmest thanks, not merely on our own behalf, but in behalf of those heathens, who, though at present unconscious of your compassion towards them, shall, nevertheless, bless you to all eternity for having thus contributed to unfold to them the pages of everlasting truth.

It will give you pleasure to hear that the Lord has so smiled upon this work, as to enable us to put to press versions of the Sacred Scriptures in five of the eastern languages, the Shanscrit, the Hindooستانee, the Bengalee, the Mahratta, and the Orissa; and to go forward in preparing versions in five more of these languages, the Chinese, the Persian, the Telinga, the Guguratte, and the languages of the Seiks.

In this laborious and extensive

work, we derive very great encouragement from the countenance and support of our dear Christian brethren in America, as well as in Europe; and we beg leave to assure you, that every degree of support afforded shall be applied to the furtherance of the work in the most faithful and economical manner.

We remain, dearly beloved brethren, most affectionately yours in our common Lord,

W. CAREY, J. CHATER,  
J. MARSHMAN, JOSHUA ROWE,  
W. WARD, WM. ROBINSON,  
R. MARDON, FELIX CAREY.

J. BISS,  
*Mission-house, Serampore,*  
Oct. 14th, 1806.

*Extract of a Letter from the Missionaries to Capt. Wickes.*

---Think, dear brother, what the king of Zion has done for India, since you first, in 1799, brought out missionaries; not merely by our means, but in a variety of ways: what a progress in the translation and distribution of the word of God into so many languages spoken by so many millions of men; how many thousands of missionary tracts have gone all over Hindostan, how many natives have been baptized, and some landed safe in glory; what a broad foundation laid for the future extension of the gospel; what an increase of missionary strength. Episcopal, Independent, and Baptist, beside the number of native itinerants. How emphatically true respecting India, "Behold, the fields are already white for the harvest." Let this be acknowledged as a constant and infallible proof that you have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

To Mr. Joseph Easiburn, Philadelphia.  
DEAR BROTHER,

Captain Wickes tells me that I am a letter in your debt. Excuse this omission, of which, indeed, I was not conscious. Our dear captain can tell you how full our hands are. I have been reading a proof now, till my eyes smarted so that I was induced to throw myself on the couch to rest them. I now begin to write to you.

By this voyage of our dear captain, we have received in comfort two brethren and their wives; and we are

now eleven missionaries. Except brother Chamberlain, we are, also, all at Serampore. You know the English company don't like the Hindus to be converted, and it is a part of their charter that they will not do any thing to change their religion. They, also, allow none (except by sufferance) but their own servants to settle in the country. We have been, also, lately prohibited by the governor from interfering with the prejudices of the natives, either by preaching, distributing tracts, sending out native itinerants, &c. In short, the governor said, as he did not attempt to disturb the prejudices of the natives, he hoped we should not. Thus, if we were to obey this request, in its literal meaning, we must give up our work altogether, and instead of wanting fresh missionaries, we might reship those we already have. But it is impossible to do this. We avoid provoking the government, but we dare not give up our work at the command of man. We have written home on the subject, and sought relief from these painful restrictions, but what will be the result we know not. In the mean time our junior brethren are getting the languages, and as soon as we can place them in separate stations, we shall. At present the gospel sound has spread so extensively that we have now more inquirers than we have in general. Our native brethren, too, are not idle.

The school, translations, printing, college, &c. &c. are concerns so weighty that there is no appearance of the governor's restriction at the Mission-house. All is bustle here, morning, noon and night.

This is the time for you, American Christians, to pray for the Serampore mission, for God only can open to us an effectual door. "He openeth and no man shutteth."

"For where his servants have his cause to plead,  
Nor Seas, nor mountains can their course impede,  
Infernal powers are silent at his nod,  
Heaven, earth, and hell exclaim, this is the Son of God."

Brother Wickes will give you all the news about us.

I am, my dear brother, yours very cordially, W. WARD.

Serampore, Oct. 15, 1806.

[Some obstructions are made to the exertions of the missionaries by the gov-

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ernmental agents in India. The preceding letter will serve to explain the nature and cause of these obstructions. Some of our readers may need to be informed that Serampore, fifteen miles only from Calcutta, is a Danish settlement, where the missionaries are both protected and encouraged in their work, and where the "mission house" is erected. Captain Wickes being informed that the missionaries whom he last took out might meet with something unpleasant if he landed them at Calcutta, to which he was bound, carried them immediately to Serampore. The British superintendent wrote to the Danish governor of Serampore, inquiring about the missionaries, and whether he considered them as under the protection of the Danish government. The Danish governor returned the following answer.]

To C. T. MARTIN, Esq. Magistrate.  
SIR,

I have been favoured with your letter of the 13th instant, informing me that Messrs. Chater and Robinson, two missionaries recently arrived at Serampore in the American ship Benjamin Franklin, had, among other papers, produced a certificate with my signature, stating that they reside at Serampore under the protection of the Danish flag, and in consequence thereof you wish to be informed at whose suggestion, and under whose patronage, these gentlemen left England, or whether they have come out under the promise of protection from any person on the part of his Danish majesty.

With regard thereto I beg leave to inform you, that some years back, and at a time when several members of the Baptist society took up their residence at this place, the former chief, now deceased, colonel Bie, reported to his superiors in Europe their arrival, and that an additional number of them might be expected hereafter, requesting, at the same time, permission for them to stay, as they appeared not only to be good, moral, but also well informed men, who, in many respects, might be useful to this settlement; upon which an order was issued to the chief and council, dated Copenhagen the 5th of September, 1801, not only granting full permission for them to establish themselves

here, but also to protect them, not doubting but they, as good citizens, would pay due obedience to our laws and regulations.

The certificate granted by me is founded upon this high order, and as Messrs. Chater and Robinson were represented as belonging to the mission society (which is really the case) I have acknowledged them as such, and extended the protection to them. The persons alluded to, can, therefore, not be considered as refugees or poor debtors, merely under a temporary protection, but must be looked upon as countenanced and protected by his Danish majesty himself, as long as they continue to live in a settlement subject to his crown, and are found to pursue only their respective professions, without attempting innovations, which I, from their uniform good conduct, have reason to expect will never be the case.

I have the honour to be, &c.

*Extract of a Letter from the Missionaries to Robert Ralston, Esq. dated Serampore, Oct. 16, 1806.*

VERY DEAR SIR,

We have heard with gratitude of the generosity of several individuals respecting the procuring and forwarding benevolent aids to the translations of the word of God. We have also heard of your many personal exertions to promote the subscriptions throughout the United States.

Very dear Sir, we feel ourselves incapable of expressing our sense of these many marks of Christian love. We doubt not but the great Head of the church looks down with peculiar pleasure on these disinterested proofs of love to him and his cause on earth: and we hear him saying (of you and a great many) of the distinguished friends of this his cause, "Verily I say unto you, they shall in no wise lose their reward." We know, Sir, you do not work for reward; but the approbation and smile of Jesus are better than life itself; and this is our joy, that those who express their love to us, for the sake of the cause in which we are engaged, so far as it is under the influence of the divine Spirit, shall be rewarded, though we are not able to do it.

Captain Wickes, who, when here, is always one of us, will communicate

to you all our state, internal and external. The cause is making progress, though we are constantly taught that it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of Jehovah.

To ROBERT RALSTON, Esq.

VERY DEAR SIR,

Your kind favour I received by Mr. Bayley of the Bainbridge, and your second by the —, giving an account of a further sum of two thousand dollars generously collected in America, for the purpose of assisting us in the translation of the word of God into the Eastern languages. I need not say that this and what we received per the Bainbridge, shall be faithfully applied to the purposes for which it was sent. A public letter from our whole body will inform you what we have already done, and what we are now doing.

What a mercy it is that we may be permitted to do any thing for Christ, and that he does not reject us and our offerings too.

I have no need to say much about our affairs, because our dear friend, Captain Wickes, will inform you of all things, much better than I can do by writing. Suffice it to say that the work of God is gradually going on, few ordinance days occur without some addition from among the heathen, and inquirers frequently come from different parts, some of whom not only seek, but find. We have met with some obstructions from government, which are to us highly afflicting: but, I trust, a gracious God will cause all these things to work together eventually for the furtherance of the gospel.

There are some very encouraging stirrings in Calcutta. Till our public preaching was stopped, there was a large body of the natives daily attend-

ing on the gospel; and since the prohibition, some Armenians and Portuguese have taken so decided a part on the side of the gospel that one of them is fitting up a part of his house for the express purpose of having preaching in it to the Hindoos, and another house has been, also, opened by another man through their suggestion. These are circumstances which give us great encouragement, and will, I hope, be the occasion of great good.

How it rejoices my heart to hear such good tidings from America. I find there are still very glorious displays of divine grace in many parts, and that the greatest part of those awakened in the late remarkable revival, turn out well: nothing will so effectually silence all objections to the word, as the suitable conduct and conversation of those who were the subjects thereof.

I am greatly pleased with the many attempts to spread the gospel through America, by itinerancies and missionary excursions. The journals published in the Magazine were to me a treat indeed. I hope that the spirit of missions will increase a hundred fold throughout the United States.

Pray has a mission to St. Domingo been ever thought of? It is a very desirable thing that the inhabitants of that extensive island should hear of and know him, who can make them free indeed.

— Cease not to remember, at a throne of grace, the cause of the Redeemer in India, and one who is yours very affectionately.

Calcutta, 28th Oct. 1806. W. CAREY.

 Further extracts from these interesting letters will be presented in our next Number.

## Obituary.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE REV. DR. STILLMAN.

SAMUEL STILLMAN, D. D. was born at Philadelphia, Feb. 27, 1737. He was educated at an academy in Charleston, S. C. where he was or-

dained in Feb. 1759. The same year he took his degree at Philadelphia College, and settled in the ministry on James' Island, near Charleston, S. C. Obliged on account of his ill health, to quit that place in about

eighteen months after his first residence there, he removed to Bordentown, N. J. where he continued two years, supplying two different congregations. Afterward he visited New-England, and having officiated at the Second Baptist Church in Boston about one year, was installed over the First, Jan. 9, 1765.

Dr. Stillman was by nature endowed with a good capacity, and an uncommon vivacity and quickness of apprehension. His feelings were peculiarly strong and lively; which gave energy to whatever he did, and under the influence and control of religious principles, served to increase and diffuse his eminent piety. To this constitutional ardour, both of sentiment and action, which led him to enter *with his whole soul* into every object which engaged his attention, he united a remarkable delicacy of feeling, and sense of propriety, and such sprightliness and affability in conversation, such ease and politeness of manners, and at the same time, such a glow of pious zeal and affection, as enabled him to mingle with all ranks and classes of people, and to discharge all his duties as a Christian minister, and as a citizen, with dignity, acceptance and usefulness. The lively interest he appeared to take in whatever affected the happiness or increased the pleasures of his friends, the gentleness of his reproofs, and the gratification he seemed to feel in commanding others, united to his social qualities, endeared him to all who knew him.

The popularity of a preacher commonly declines with his years. Dr. Stillman, however, was a singular exception to this general remark. He retained it for upwards of 42 years, and his congregation, which, upon his first connexion with it, was the smallest in this town, at the age of 70, the period of his death, he left amongst the most numerous.

As a minister of Christ his praise was in all the churches. For this great work he was prepared by the grace of God in his early conversion, and a diligent improvement of his natural talents in a course of theological studies under the direction of the late excellent Mr. Hart. He embraced what are denominated *the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel*, or the *doctrines of grace*, as they are summed up

in *the Assembly's Shorter Catechism*, the doctrines of *the Reformation*, which were held very precious, as the truths of Scripture by the fathers of New-England. These doctrines he explained and enforced with clearness, and with an apostolic zeal and intrepidity. He opened to his hearers the way of salvation through a **DIVINE REDEEMER**. Though an advocate for *Christian candour* and liberality, he was no friend to modern refinements in theology; but viewed their progress with deep concern, and opposed to it vigorously all his eloquence and influence. He considered these refinements as *cankerous* to pure and undefiled religion, and subversive of Christian morality. He felt a deep concern for the interests of Zion. His heart mourned at her depression, and exulted in her prosperity.

Dr. Stillman was favoured by the Author of his being, with a pleasant and most commanding voice, the very tones of which were admirably adapted to awaken the feelings of an audience; and he always managed it with great success. His eloquence was of the powerful and impressive, rather than of the insinuating and persuasive kind; and his manner so strikingly interesting, that he never preached to an inattentive audience. And even those, who dissented from him in religious opinions, were still pleased with hearing him; for they knew his sincerity—they knew him to be a good man. There was a fervour in his prayers, that seldom failed to awaken the devotion of his hearers; for, *coming from the heart, it failed not to reach the hearts of others*. In his sermons, he was animated and pathetic. His subjects were often *doctrinal*, but he commonly deduced practical inferences from them, and every one acknowledged his great usefulness. He addressed not only the understandings, but the hearts and feelings of his hearers. He was an *experimental* preacher, laid open the deceitfulness of the human heart, exhibited the various trials and comforts of Christians; guided them in the way to eternal life, and led the way.

In the chamber of sickness and affliction he was always a welcome visitor. So well could he adapt his conversation, as to comfort or to caution, soothe or to awaken—just as the

case seemed to require. And if he administered reproof, it was done in so delicate and mild a manner, that it oftener conciliated esteem, than created offence. In his prayers with the sick, however intricate the occasion, he was always both appropriate and highly devotional. So eminent was his character for piety, and so universally was he beloved, that he was often called to the sick and afflicted of different denominations. How many wounded hearts he has bound up, and from how many weeping eyes he has wiped the tears away; how many thoughtless sinners he was the means of awakening; and how many saints he has edified and built up unto eternal life; how many wavering minds he has settled, and to how many repenting sinners his words administered peace, can be fully known only at the great day.

The integrity of Dr. S.'s character was such as produced universal confidence in him. Expressive of this was his election by the town of Boston, as a member of the State Convention, for the formation of the State Constitution, in 1779; as also for the adoption of the Federal Constitution, in 1788. In this last body he delivered a very eloquent speech in its support; and was considered, at the time, as having contributed much towards its adoption, and confirmed many members in its favour, who were previously wavering upon that question. To that constitution, he ever after continued a firm, unshaken friend, and a warm approver of the administrations of WASHINGTON and ADAMS,

In 1789, he delivered the town Oration on the 4th of July, in which he also highly celebrated the virtues of the Father of his Country.

The University in Cambridge conferred on him the honorary degree of A. M. in 1761, and the College of Rhode Island gave him a diploma of D. D. in 1788.

To his church and people he was particularly attentive, and suffered no calls of relaxation or amusement to interfere with the conscientious discharge of the smallest professional duty. His duty was always indeed his delight, and nothing in his mind ever stood in any sort of competition with it.

His domestic character was in per-

fect unison with the other parts of it. Of husbands, he was one of the most kind and accommodating;—of parents, the most affectionate and endearing.—It pleased the Author of Wisdom to visit him with peculiar trials. In the course of a few years he was called to bury seven of his children, all adults, and some of them with families; yet such was his confidence in the perfect wisdom of God's government, that he was always patient and submissive, and his mind lost nothing of its lively confidence and cheerful hope.

His habit of body, through life, was weakly, and he was not unused to occasional interruptions of his ministerial labours; yet he survived all his clerical cotemporaries both in this town and its vicinity. It was his constant prayer that "*his life and his usefulness might run parallel.*" In this, his desires were gratified. A slight indisposition detained him at home the two last Lord's days of his life. On the Wednesday following the second of them, without any previous symptoms, he was suddenly attacked, at about 11 o'clock, A. M. by a paralytic shock. At 10 at night, having received a second stroke, he grew insensible, and at 12 expired. Could he have selected the manner of his death, it had probably been such an one as this, which spared him the pain of separation from a flock he was most ardently attached to, and a family he most tenderly loved; a scene, which to a person of his feeling mind, notwithstanding all his religion, must have occasioned a shock. On the Monday following, his remains were attended to the Meeting House, where a pathetic and appropriate discourse was delivered on the occasion, by the Rev. Dr. BALDWIN, pastor of the 2d Baptist Church in this town, from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, to an immensely thronged and deeply affected assembly; after which his remains were carried to the tomb, amidst the regrets of a numerous concourse of people, who crowded around his bier, to take a last look at the urn, which contained the relics of him, who once to them was so dear, but whose face they now should see no more. His loss will long be felt, not only by his own immediate Society, but all his other numerous friends.

*The memory of the just is blessed.*

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Wm. COOPER, has come to hand and shall appear next month.

We have received the Remarks of *Candidus*, on the Extract from Sennebier's History of Literature, [see Panoplist for Sept.] which contains an account of Calvin's treatment of Servetus. This respectable correspondent will excuse us if we decline publishing his objections in the manner in which they are brought forward. Were they reduced to a concise and specific form, and accompanied by proper references to authorities, we could have no objection to their admission; as *truth* is our object. Were we to admit the whole communication of *Candidus*, as it now stands, it would still be a question, whether we are to submit to his authority or to that of Sennebier. Especially when we consider, that the extract from Sennebier, which we published, received the sanction of the late learned Dr. Erskine, who was intimately conversant with ecclesiastical history, and with European literature.

We readily admit the correctness and pertinency of many of the remarks of *Candidus*. With some abatement in respect to the characters and conduct of the first Reformers, we could subscribe to the following observations. "It cannot be contested that the Reformers were pretty generally," we should say, in too frequent instances, "actuated by a blind, intemperate zeal against all, whom they suspected to be enemies of the gospel of truth, and embraced too often, improper methods for its support, which by the more candid and Christian sentiments of our day, are disapproved. *Calvin* too was a son of Zebedee. Francis Davidis also experienced, that even *Socinus* was, in this respect, not more tinctured with the meek doctrine of our humble Saviour. It becomes us to state historical facts fairly; then we may try, as far as truth will allow, to lessen *their* faults, who greatly sinned through ignorance. Let the purity of our doctrine and lives be their severest condemnation, and the mouth of unbelief shall be stopped forever."

The following are pertinent and forcible observations of *Candidus*, intended to expose one of the pleas of Sennebier in favour of *Calvin*. "Had Sennebier, to extenuate *Calvin's* guilt, fairly acknowledged this instance of human weakness, and expatiated on *Calvin's* piety; on his eminent services in the cause of Christendom; on his elegant, learned writings; on that masterly piece of composition, his preface, and I had nearly said, unequalled dedication to Francis I.; on his modesty, as a divine interpreter, and his disinterestedness; had he even concluded with his panegyrist Beza, that *Calvin left us in his life and death an example, which it was more easy to slander than to imitate*; had Sennebier delineated, with few strokes, the turbulent spirit of democracy rankling in every breast at Geneva, *Calvin's* high authority in that city, with his uncontrolled power in the church, as President in the assembly of the clergy and ecclesiastical judicatory; had he shown this reformer exasperated by the virulent invectives of his haughty antagonist, and urged his irritable temper unused to brook opposition, he might have induced his readers to deplore the frailty of *Calvin*, and to avert their eyes from a foul spot in such a bright character. But what friend of *Calvin* can bear with patience Sennebier's plea? " *Calvin's* situation was delicate. The Catholics accused him of dangerous errors. Had he remained an indifferent spectator of the process against Servetus, they would have pronounced him a favourer of his opinions." "Had Servetus escaped, his gross and abusive charges against *Calvin* would have appeared to be well founded." If *Calvin's* conduct will admit no better apology than this, his character, we freely grant, deserves to be stigmatized.

If, after the foregoing remarks, *Candidus* shall feel disposed to forward us his remaining communications on this subject, they shall be treated with the respect due to their author.

Z. on *Christian Zeal*, and the Biographical Sketch by *Theophilus* shall appear next month.

Our other correspondents shall be attended to as fast as the limits of our work will admit.